

Saudi council holds first meeting

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's first representative assembly in 60 years held its first meeting Sunday, a few days after it was inaugurated by King Fahd as part of long-promised political reforms to the kingdom. The official Saudi Press Agency said the 60-man Shura Council, chaired by its speaker former Justice Minister Sheikh Mohammed Ben Ibrahim Ben Jubeir, met and agreed to set up eight committees dealing with Islamic affairs, foreign affairs, security, finance and economy, social and health affairs, education, culture and media, services and administration. The council also agreed to meet again on Monday, SPA said. King Fahd, who appointed the 60 members, had inaugurated the council on Wednesday. The council will not hold public sessions. It is the first institution giving citizens a say in the affairs of Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter. Senior members of the royal family have traditionally controlled the vast oil wealth, huge foreign assets and political and military affairs of the kingdom of 17 million. Diplomats say the council represents the various sectors of Saudi society and the appointments were well received by the Saudi people.



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Israel, PLO to hold new economic talks

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) will meet for a fresh round of talks on the economic aspects of their autonomy deal in Paris on Monday, a finance ministry official said. It will be the fifth meeting of the economic committee set up under the Sept. 13 autonomy agreement which has led donors to pledge \$2 billion for the Palestinians over two years. The Israeli delegation will be led by senior treasury official David Brodwin. The economic committee is one of the four set up to work out how to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Israeli-backed gunman wounded

MARIJOUN, Lebanon (AP) — A roadside bomb explosion seriously wounded an Israeli-affiliated militia officer in South Lebanon Sunday, security sources said. They said the attack occurred near the village of Tallush, on the edge of the central sector of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone" at 2:15 p.m. (1215 GMT). No group claimed responsibility for the explosion, set off by remote control as the officer drove on the main road to the village. His car was gutted. The security sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the area in which the attack occurred suggested that the Hizbullah was behind it. They identified the wounded man only by his codename of Abu Daik, an officer with the South Lebanon army militia.

Kuwait jails bedoun for 'collaboration'

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A Kuwaiti court Sunday sentenced a man to 10 years in prison after convicting him of serving in the Iraqi army during the occupation. Juher Saghir Farhan, a 34-year-old bedoun or a resident with no nationality, was convicted by the high state security court of joining the "popular army," an auxiliary of the Iraqi army, the official KUNA news agency reported. Another bedoun, Hani Marzuk, was acquitted of collaboration charges for lack of evidence. Since U.S.-led forces freed Kuwait from seven months of Iraqi occupation in February 1991, more than 200 people, including many bedoun, have been convicted of collaboration and given various sentences.

7 killed in Algerian violence

ALGIERS (AFP) — Unidentified gunmen killed seven civilians in separate incidents in an upsurge of violence Friday and Saturday, security service officials said Sunday. Over the same two-day period a number of schools and colleges were targeted in arson attacks in various parts of the country, the sources said. Meanwhile, armed groups targeted educational establishments. Three colleges and two schools were attacked in Blida, a college and a grammar school in Oum Al Bouaghi, a grammar school in Cherif and a college in Ain Defla. Security service vehicles officials said some 60 lorries, coaches and public services were also the subject of arson attacks in the same period.

Right-wing rebel arrested in Moscow

MOSCOW (R) — Police have arrested a right-wing leader who helped conservative hard-liners defend Russia's White House parliament building in October last year, Interfax news agency said Sunday. The agency said Alexander Barkashev, head of the banned nationalist Russian National Unity movement, had been arrested late last week and transferred to a special Interior Ministry hospital. He was the last ringleader of the rebellion still being sought by police. An Interior Ministry official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters that the ministry would publish a formal statement about Mr. Barkashev Monday.

Kaddoumi to lead PLO team to Amman talks

King's call for coordination reflected deep concern over delays — Anani

By Lamis K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) political department Farouk Kaddoumi, will arrive in Amman this week to launch a new beginning for coordination with Jordan over peace talks with Israel, PLO sources said Sunday.

The planned visit of the top-level PLO delegation reflected an important shift in the organisation's tactic to focus on closer coordination with the Arab states, particularly Jordan, after the failure so far of negotiations with Israel to implement Palestinian autonomy. Initially, Palestinian President and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat had appeared reluctant to bind himself to any agreements with Jordan regarding the Kingdom's role during the agreed-upon transitional Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. But last week Mr. Arafat made a surprise visit to Amman for urgent discussions with His Majesty King Hussein about obstacles impeding Palestinian autonomy.

In a revealing by candid address to senior Jordanian army officers, King Hussein said Sunday that he has cautioned Mr. Arafat that if coordination did not start this week it could be the last chance before Jordan and the PLO find themselves taking separate courses. (see separate

story) Information Minister Jawad Al Anani told Jordan Television Sunday that the King's statements reflected deep concern about the resumption of coordination with the PLO. "The King's speech" reflected deep concern that coordination should be on the highest levels and on very clear basis," Dr. Anani said.

Mr. Arafat promised King Hussein to send a delegation on Tuesday to start immediate coordination with Jordan. But the Jordanian government seems to be concerned that the PLO leader might put off the meetings, as he has done in the past pending clearer results of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

According to Dr. Anani, the King was stressing the time element in getting the PLO to start serious discussions with Jordan about the peace process and Jordanian-Palestinian relations. The minister explained that the King was actually calling for putting a definite timetable for Jordanian-Palestinian coordination.

"The relationship is affected by the peace process and the ongoing (Israeli-Palestinian) negotiations," Dr. Anani pointed out. "Consequently, any delay or postponement of coordination could pose serious threats to Jordan."

In his address, King Hussein also disclosed that he has appealed to Mr. Arafat to drop his demand for establishing

confederal ties in the immediate future.

Mr. Arafat has been insisting that an agreement with Jordan should be part of a confederation between two independent states.

PLO officials told the Jordan Times last week that the two sides have agreed, following the King's two-hour meeting with Mr. Arafat, to effectively put off the discussion of future relations and focus on immediate specific issues.

Tunis-based PLO officials said that the leadership has read the King's speech carefully, but did not see any reason to alter its plans.

"The two sides are in dire need of each other. Neither of us can afford a crisis," said a Tunis-based PLO official.

The King has also expressed annoyance with suggestions that Jordan was opposing Palestinian control over the crossings points between Jordan and Jericho.

Israeli negotiators have told the PLO they could not yield to Palestinian demands to control the crossing points since Jordan "objected" to such a step.

The issue was clarified during Thursday's meeting and the King and Mr. Arafat concluded that closer coordination was crucial to boost each other's negotiating standing vis-a-vis Israel. But many differences remain that the Two

(Continued on page 3)

King: Jordan resisting pressures for treaty before solving basic issues

Coordination with Palestinians needed now

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein has revealed that Jordan came under immense pressure to sign a separate peace treaty with Israel but that the Kingdom would not enter any such agreement without resolving basic outstanding issues with the Jewish state — the human dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the return of Jordanian land occupied by Israel and the restoration of the Kingdom's water rights.

In an address to senior Armed Forces officers on Saturday, the King also emphasised the importance of a comprehensive peace settlement and of Jerusalem as a city holy to all three monotheistic religions of the

world and reiterated Jordan's rejection of any single country exercising sovereignty over the Islamic shrines.

"We have lately come under pressure, but we will not succumb to what we see as unjust," said the King. "We will bow only to Almighty God..."

The King said Jordan stood firm on its stand that a peace treaty should "come only at the end of the negotiations when all issues have been solved in a manner satisfactory to ourselves and the other parties involved in the peace process."

"Peace is not a matter of ink on paper or a document signed before negotiations start," said the King. "We should discuss everything and

once we have reached an acceptable and reasonable result the peace we seek would have been achieved," he added.

"We strive to follow this course and we are focusing on three main issues," the King said, listing the issues as the land Israel occupied in 1967, Jordan's water rights and, in the Jordanian-Palestinian context, the human dimension of the conflict.

King Hussein also gave Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat a "last chance" to agree on future Jordanian-Palestinian relations in talks this week. "I consider the meeting I had with President Arafat 48 hours ago to have



been decisive," King Hussein said of the PLO chairman's (Continued on page 3)

Assad expects Clinton to have new proposals

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad expects to hear new proposals for reviving peace talks with Israel when he meets U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva later this month, official radio said Sunday.

"President Clinton would not have arranged the meeting if he did not have new (proposals) to move the peace process forward and revive hopes for peace," Damascus Radio said. "Syria would like to know the new (proposals) of the American administration which has decided to play the role of full, active and effective partner" in the Arab-Israeli peace talks, it said.

Official bilateral peace talks between Israel and Syria are expected to resume in Washington in early February after Mr. Clinton and Mr. Assad meet in Geneva on Jan. 16.

Israeli and Syrian academics, meeting secretly in Norway, agreed on a document that could foreshadow a breakthrough in their governments' peace talks, an Israeli participant said on Sunday.

Professor Yossi Olmert, who attended the last meeting in October, said two Syrian academics present spelled out a vision of "full peace" in exchange for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"The document reflects readiness of the Syrians present to accept that full peace is exactly what it is — normalisation, open borders, consular and diplomatic relations, trade and cultural relations," Mr. Olmert told Reuters.

"I think there is a discussion that this should be Syrian policy. I think it could be an important indication," said Mr. Olmert, a former negotiator to Washington peace talks with Syria.

He said the document was passed on to the Israeli and Syrian leadership.

Israeli-Syrian peace talks began more than two years ago but have been unable to reconcile Israeli demands for "full peace" with Syrian insistence on a full Israeli pullout from the Golan Heights.

Asked about the meetings, reported by Israeli newspapers, Mr. Rabin's spokesman Gad Ben-Ari said: "They are not being conducted on behalf of the government of Israel. They do not bind us in any way."

Mr. Rabin said in a weekend radio interview he expected a positive change in the Syrian position at the Clinton-Assad summit.

Qatari minister ends visit saying reconciliation sealed

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Al Thani Sunday wound up a visit to Jordan saying his two days of talks here had sealed Qatari-Jordanian reconciliation after a strain caused by the 1990-91 Gulf crisis.

Sheikh Hamad, addressing a press conference before leaving for home, also announced the formation of a joint committee at foreign ministers' level to develop political and economic cooperation between Jordan and his country.

He said the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, was planning a state visit to Jordan. He did not give any date.

Sheikh Hamad conveyed a message from the emir to His Majesty King Hussein and held talks with Prime Minister



Sheikh Hamad Al Thani, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan and other officials in his first visit to Jordan after the Gulf crisis. His Royal Highness Crown

Prince Hassan visited Qatar in the second half of 1993 and held high-level talks with the emir and senior Qatari officials on political and economic relations and means to revitalise cooperation.

Sheikh Hamad's visit to Jordan was seen as a follow-up to the process launched during the Crown Prince's visit to Doha.

His discussions here covered inter-Arab differences, bilateral relations and the 26-month-old Middle East peace process.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, quoted Dr. Majali and Sheikh Hamad as calling for Arab countries to settle their differences and emphasising the need to reestablish Arab solidarity on the basis of mutual trust and confidence.

Petra quoted Sheikh Hamad as voicing his country's support for Jordan's (Continued on page 10)



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Fierce fighting rages in Afghan capital

KABUL (Agencies) — Dozens were feared dead and at least 350 wounded in Kabul as rocket and artillery battles raged for a second day Sunday between Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani's forces and fighters led by an ex-communist general.

The two main hospitals in the city centre reported 350 wounded and at least eight dead, but doctors said the number was likely to rise once the bombardment eased and those needing treatment were able to reach hospitals.

No exact death toll was available because bodies were not taken to hospitals during the fiercest rocket and artillery fire in Kabul for six months.

Blistering rocket and artillery exchanges erupted for the second day at dawn between forces loyal to Mr. Rabbani and fighters led by northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, backed by hardline Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Plumes of smoke spiralled above Kabul as thousands of rockets, shells and mortars battered the city, many missing their military targets and hitting residential areas.

Small-arms skirmishes raged through the deserted streets, preventing the wounded from reaching hospitals. Only a few tanks and taxis raced through the streets.

Erratic electricity supplies to the war-shattered city were cut off, and only a few residents emerged from their homes, dodging rockets and shrapnel.

Many roads were blocked by street battles between Rabbani forces and Dostum fighters whose posts and checkpoints often stand almost side-by-side in a city divided into a patchwork of rival fiefdoms that have co-existed in uneasy neutrality for months.

Concentrated rocket and artillery fire came from the ancient hilltop Bala Hissar fort, just south of the city centre, that is held by Gen. Dostum's militia.

Rabbani commander Pahlawan Mahdavi said the battles in Kabul marked the spread of hostilities from the north, where Gen. Dostum's men have clashed sporadically with government troops for weeks.

He said fighting between government forces and Dostum militia in the north escalated on Friday when jets belonging to a Rabbani ally, governor Ismail Khan of the western city of Herat, bombed Dostum position in the northern province of Faryab.

After months of only sporadic fighting, the huge clash began in the pre-dawn hours of New Year's Day. There was a lull overnight, and then heavy fighting began again Sunday at dawn.

Workers with the International Committee of the Red Cross, normally the most reliable source for casualty figures, had to take cover from the shelling in the basements of their homes, and no one was at the office.

Minister of State Security General Fahim told Reuters that Hezb-e-Islami forces were taking part in the battle.

Guerrillas of the Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat Party, another member of the coalition government, have also thrown their weight behind Gen. Dostum, a spokesman said.

Hundreds of rockets were being fired between hilltop positions held by the rival groups around the city.

Hundreds still held in Algerian camps

ALGIERS (Agencies) — At least 780 people rounded up over the last two years in a crackdown on Islamic fundamentalists are still held in Sahara desert camps, a human rights group has charged.

The detainees, held at Oued Namous and Ain Mguel in the country's vast southern desert, are the last of some 9,000 people herded into a total of five camps in March 1992.

Kamel Rezag Bara, a lawyer and president of the state's official National Observatory for Human Rights, made the figures public in an interview published Sunday in the newspaper Al Moudjahid.

His statements contradicted assertions Oct. 31 by Justice Minister Mohammed Tegui that all the detention centres had been closed.

Three days earlier, an independent human-rights league had reported that some 1,000 people were still detained. The vast majority have never been charged with a crime or tried.

They were rounded up en masse as the military-backed government that seized power in January 1992 to prevent a fundamentalist election victory tried to crush its opponents.

Despite steady escalation of repression, including the sentencing of some 300 suspects to death, authorities have been unable to stamp out an armed revolt by extremists.

"The application of anti-terrorist legislation may have led to, in a certain number of cases, abuses and excesses," Rezag Bara said. "We have asked for judicial inquiries into a certain number of suspicious deaths."

Algerian newspapers meanwhile reported Sunday that a captain of the national police survived being shot and stabbed Wednesday in the elevator of his apartment building.

Authorities suspect that attack was carried out by Islamic extremists whose insurgency has claimed some 2,000 lives over the past two years, primarily among the police and army.

The insurgents have recently turned their sights on foreigners, mostly employees of foreign oil companies, killing 24 since September in an apparent bid to destabilise the economy.

On Oct. 28, the chairman of the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights, Abdul Nour Al Yahia, announced that nearly 1,000 extremists continued to be detained in two of these centres.

Legal investigations were ordered after reports of brutalities by security forces and suspect cases of sudden death.

Human rights league charges of torture could not be investigated as no complaints had been filed, Mr. Rezag-Bara added.

Sanctions were imposed against a number of officials after about a dozen legal actions had been entered for alleged ill-treatment.

Algerian authorities voided a first-round election won by the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) in December 1991 and then banned a second round of voting later detaining FIS leaders.

Rezag-Bara said fresh elections would have to be held some day, but he added: "There are kinds of oppression from ballot boxes that are more dangerous than organisations that do not rely on ballot boxes."

Syria joins criticism of Vatican

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria on Sunday joined critics of the Israeli-Vatican accord, saying the Holy See had made a "serious mistake" by recognising the Jewish state.

The Vatican "has given up on Jerusalem and struck a blow against the aspirations and rights of the Arabs, both Christians and Muslims," charged the government daily Tishrin.

It said that by avoiding reference to the status of East Jerusalem, the accord "ignores the destiny of an entire people."

Israel and the Vatican signed the recognition accord on Thursday in occupied Jerusalem paving the way for the establishment of diplomatic ties for Pope John Paul II to visit the Holy Land.

Tishrin said the accord "gives Israel a free hand in the affairs of the holy places and the occupied Palestinian territories."

"It is clear that the Vatican has committed a serious mistake," said the daily. The Holy See has gone back on its support for the Palestinians and "given legitimacy to the violations of the holy sites."

It said the Pope's planned visit to Lebanon was aimed at securing the region's acceptance of the accord with Israel.

In Lebanon pro-Iranian groups on Saturday denounced the Israeli-Vatican agreement, with group calling for a boycott of the papal visit in May.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez said: "We would have preferred it if Israel's recognition by the Vatican had taken place after the Jewish state complied with the principles" of Middle East peace process.

The pact should "at least be part of pressure on Israel to implement international resolutions" and the return of occupied Arab territories, Mr. Bouez said.

Arafat is 'confident' of independent state

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has said he was "confident" an independent Palestinian state would come into existence with Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. Arafat, in a message marking the 29th anniversary of the creation of his Fatah movement faction, called on the Palestinian people to remain united to achieve this "sacred goal."

He said the autonomy accord signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel in September in Washington has carried the Palestinians to a new era that should witness the establishment of the "first Palestinian national authority" in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in the West Bank.

"We enter the new era with confidence and a lot of hope, but without any illusions," Mr. Arafat said, stressing that their were still many difficulties to surmount.

Israel and the PLO have not reached an agreement yet over details that have so far blocked the implementation of the autonomy agreement in the occupied territories.

Negotiations between the two sides have stumbled over the boundaries of Jericho, the security of Jewish settlements and the control of the international borders of the autonomous areas.

Mr. Arafat said the accord was just a first step towards peace which would not be complete before implementing all United Nations Security Council resolutions and regaining "all Arab rights at all the fronts."

He also referred to the importance of "Arab coordination" to boost the Arab stand against Israel in the bilateral negotiations.

The PLO leader had been criticised by some Arab countries, notably Syria, for signing a treaty with Israel without consulting with other Arab states.

Mr. Arafat said a complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, "the capital of our independent state," was still the ultimate goal.

He also listed among the future goals of the PLO, guaranteeing the human rights of Palestinian refugees according to international conventions, drawing out the final borders of the future state and solving the issue of growing Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

After all that, Mr. Arafat said, the Palestinian and Jordanian peoples would have to vote "freely and voluntarily" for or against a confederation.

Compromise proposals

The PLO is pressing for separate border control windows to vet everyone entering and leaving its self-rule areas with only discreet Israeli monitoring, according to a draft of its thoughts following talks in Egypt.

In a document faxed to Israel Thursday, the organisation said it rejected an Israeli proposal for one border checkpoint terminal, with an Israeli window and a Palestinian window, separated by a tinted glass partition.

"There will be two entry terminals instead of one. One to Gaza and Jericho under complete Palestinian supervision, whereby security coordination with Israel would be through an invisible Israeli monitoring post," the document said.

"The other terminal leading to the rest of the West Bank will be under joint supervision, and there will be international presence on both terminals or on the Palestinian-controlled terminal if the Israelis reject joint supervision on the second terminal."

The arrangement, it said, would apply to anyone crossing through Rafah passage and the three bridges on the River Jordan as well as ports and airports.

A document drafted in Cairo and rejected by the PLO said: "There will be no terminal, with an Israeli window and a Palestinian window, separated by a tinted glass partition."

"Palestinian visitors will pass through the Israeli window first. Israelis and visitors to Israel will go straight to the Israeli window."

The PLO said the Cairo draft arrangements for passage gives Israeli officials the right to vet Palestinians before Palestinian officials even see them.

"We reject Israel's suggestion that Palestinian visitors would pass through an Israeli window first, we demand they pass through the Palestinian authority window, with invisible Israeli monitoring only," a PLO official said.

He explained that "invisible" monitoring could take the form of electronic monitoring via a camera.

The PLO did not challenge a section of the Israeli draft giving each side the right of veto over who enters the self-rule area.

The crossing dispute is one of three holding up Israeli withdrawal from the two areas and the start of Palestinian self-rule under the agreement Israel and the PLO signed in September. The withdrawal was originally meant to start by Dec. 13.

After talks in Cairo this week, the Israelis said they thought they had agreed on a draft joint text. Mr. Arafat then sent the document, challenging each point.

On Friday an Israeli official described Mr. Arafat's detailed comments on the draft as unreasonable.

On one of the other disputes, the size of the Jericho area, the PLO document demanded the area be linked to border crossings on the River Jordan.

It rejected an Israeli proposal to allow Palestinian self-rule in unconnected parts of the West Bank. "Therefore the PLO decision is to group the areas proposed in the Israeli draft so they comprise one area including Jericho area provided they are linked to the bridges on the Jordan River," it said.

On the third dispute, the PLO paper said the area connecting Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip should not exceed 24 square kilometres.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Justice minister to represent Iraq in Tunis talks

AMMAN (AP) — Iraqi Justice Minister Shabib Al Maliki left Amman for Tunis on Sunday to represent his country at a meeting of Arab interior ministers in the place of Interior Minister Wathban Al Takriti, a cousin of President Saddam Hussein. There was no immediate explanation why the justice minister was standing in for the interior minister, who is said to be involved in a row with President Saddam over security lapses related to a failed assassination attempt against the president in September. Mr. Takriti has not ventured out of the country since assuming office shortly after the Gulf war, which dislodged Iraq from Kuwait following a seven month occupation in February 1991. Adel Ibrahim, spokesman for the Iraqi embassy in Amman, confirmed that Mr. Maliki flew to Tunis along with his Jordanian counterpart, Salameh Hammad. He declined further comment.

Kurdish revolt claims first 1994 victims

ANKARA (R) — A Kurdish separatist revolt claimed its first victims of the new year when rebels killed eight bus passengers in southeast Turkey, officials said on Sunday. Officials in the emergency rule governor's office in Diyarbakir said Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) militants stopped two buses on the Diyarbakir-Erzurum road Saturday night. The guerrillas took eight people from the buses, intercepted at a flying roadblock about four kilometres from the town of Maden, took them into a field and shot them dead. There was no immediate word on the motive for the killings. The PKK has been fighting for an independent Kurdish state in the southeast since 1984. The revolt has killed about 10,500 people in Turkey, more than 4,000 of whom died in 1993 alone — the bloodiest year since the start of the insurgency. Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and Deputy Prime Minister Murat Karayalcin celebrated the New Year in Diyarbakir to show the government's resolve to keep control over the troubled region. "We are very determined to end terrorism in 1994," Ms. Ciller said, describing the struggle against the PKK and economic problems as the main challenges facing her government in the New Year.

Turks clash with Kurds in Belgium

BRUSSELS (R) — Turks and Kurdish separatists clashed late on Saturday night in a Turkish quarter of Brussels, leaving several people injured and property damaged, Belgian RTBF radio reported on Sunday. It said the Turks were trying to prevent a meeting of between 150 to 200 Kurds from taking place in a hall in the Saint-Josse area of north Brussels. They became angry when a Kurdish flag was draped outside over the balcony, RTBF said. Police intervened and dispersed the crowd with a water cannon shortly after midnight. Six police and five civilians were injured, none seriously, Brussels police said. Several windows and car windcreens were broken, they added. RTBF radio said the meeting was arranged by a separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) to mark the end of a four-day protest march from Cologne. Germany banned the PKK and affiliated groups in November.

Turkmen president visits Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Turkmen President Saparmurat Niyazov arrived in Iran Sunday for a four-day visit aimed at following up on agreements between the two countries. Mr. Niyazov, heading a high-level political and economic delegation, including Turkmenistan's foreign and oil ministers, was received at the airport by his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The Turkmen leader told reporters that his country wanted to tap Iran's expertise in various fields. All the participants at the December summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Ashkhabad, including Russia, welcomed an expansion of ties between Turkmenistan and Iran, he said. "It was decided that such independent contacts would not harm, but on the contrary, be in the interest of other members of the CIS," said Mr. Niyazov. Mr. Rafsanjani, who visited Turkmenistan in October as part of a tour of Central Asia and the Caucasus, welcomed improved relations and vast economic cooperation between the two states, which share a long border.

Israeli set for first Winter Olympics

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel will be represented at a winter Olympics for the first time in Lillehammer next month when Georgian immigrant Misha Shmerkin takes to the ice. Shmerkin, 24, who arrived in Israel from Odessa two years ago, qualified for the Olympics with a 19th place at the world figure skating championships in Prague. His new home town of Metulla, on the border with Lebanon, expects to start work on a \$3 million Olympic size skating rink during the games in Norway. In the meantime he will attend a training camp in Russia. Olympic delegation chief Yossi Goldberg said: "It's a small step on ice for Metulla, but a giant step for the sport in Israel."

Oman, Iran discuss tax doubling

MUSCAT (R) Omani and Iranian officials have begun talks in Muscat on avoiding tax duplication on revenues from air transport between the two Gulf neighbours, the Omani News Agency said Sunday. The Sultanate faces Iran across the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. The commander of Oman's navy discussed naval cooperation with Iranian leaders in Tehran last month.

Strike of Athens workers continues

ATHENS (AFP) — A strike by employees of the Athens private transportation system entered its 19th day Sunday with only 650 buses out of 1,700 on city streets, backed up by 400 military buses. Dozens of private bus owners continued to block bus depots at Hellenikon and Rendi, often with their families. Strikers said they would continue their industrial action as long as the government refused to pay compensation, provided for in a law adopted by parliament on Dec. 16, for renationalising Athens transports.

Ousting of British envoy shows Sudan's irritation with West

CAIRO (AFP) — Sudan's decision to expel British ambassador reflects not only its anger at its former colonial power, but growing irritation with the West, according to observers here.

Officially, the order came because Ambassador Peter Streams "does not serve the interests of the two countries," a Sudanese Foreign Ministry statement said.

The Sudanese government blamed Mr. Streams for the cancellation of a visit of Khartoum of the archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, because of a disagreement with Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist government.

Archbishop Carey set out from Nairobi Thursday to visit Christians at Nimule, on the Ugandan border in rebel-held southern Sudan. The Khartoum government is at war with southern rebels.

Britain has threatened to expel Sudan's envoy to London after Khartoum ordered Mr. Streams to leave within 15 days and set a deadline of Jan. 4 for Khartoum's response.

According to Sudanese opposition figures in Cairo, Sudan was very eager to host Archbishop Carey.

His visit, like that of Pope John Paul II in 1990, "would have enabled the government to improve its bad reputation by promoting an image of religious tolerance," an opposition member said.

The ambassador's ouster goes beyond the framework of bilateral ties, the dissident said. It expresses the government's overall irritation with the West, which has remained steadfast vis-a-vis Khartoum despite its attempts at openness.

The regime "did to Britain, which it considers weaker, what it wouldn't dare do in the United States," he said.

Criticism of Mr. Streams was a relatively harmless reaction to the Americans' actions, he said referring to the U.S. ambassador to Sudan who has repeatedly visited the guerrilla-controlled regions via Nairobi.

The Sudanese government, which came to power in a coup in 1989, has flaunted its fundamentalist tendencies in a country where a third of the population is non-Muslim.

Most Muslims live in the north, which is predominantly Arab. Muslims are a minority in the south, where African influences prevail.

Apart from animists, Christians are about equally divided between Catholics and Protestants there.

Sharia, is in force in the north but not the south. The Sudanese government also includes an episcopalian in the cabinet. Reverend Gabriel Rorej, who serves as minister of state for foreign affairs.

Brian reacted strongly to the overthrow of the democratically-elected regime of former premier Sadek Al Mahdi. Like most Western states, Britain has halted economic assistance and cooperation to Sudan, except in the field of humanitarian aid and diplomatic ties.

More recently, Khartoum accused Britain and Egypt of behind-the-scenes manoeuvres to bar the government and the outlawed Sudan People's Liberation Army from reaching an accord during talks in the Nigerian capital in May.

Sudan's membership of the International Monetary Fund was suspended under pressure from Washington, and the U.S. has openly backed the south's "right to self-determination."

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22:00	News in English
22:30	Clayton

PRAYER TIMES	
(Sunrise)	
06:00	Fajr
10:12	Dhuhr
12:40	Dhuhr
14:25	Asr
16:48	Maghrib
18:10	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellbela	Tel. 510741
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.	627355
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624941	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	637441
De la Salle Church Tel. 621757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel.	623411

WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
The Kingdom will be affected by a depression, as clouds will build up and rain will fall in the northern and western parts of the country, and then extend to the other parts. Temperatures will drop and winds will be westerly active in Aqaba. North clouds weather conditions will prevail with a chance of showers. Winds will be southerly active and seas rough.	

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St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellbela	Tel. 510741
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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS NIGHT DUTY AMMAN: Dr. Walid Al Mawri 780286 Dr. Saad Al... 780285 Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 780287 Firas pharmacy 780288 Fawzan pharmacy 780289 Al Aqsa pharmacy 780290 Al Salam pharmacy 780291 Yacoub pharmacy 780292 Shmoun pharmacy 780293 Nafth pharmacy 780294 IRBID: Dr. Ali Al Shuqari 246181 Alqada pharmacy 1-1 ZARQA: Dr. Rafeh Alalash 982424 Khalil pharmacy 982417	
EMERGENCIES First Aid Centre 637111 Civil Defence Department 661111 Rescue 637111 Rescue Police 192 621111 Fire Brigade 891228 Blood Bank 774121 Highway Police 891228 Traffic Police 891228 Public Security Department 891228 Hotel Complaints 891228 Police Complaints 891228 Water and Sewerage 891228 Complaints 891228 Amman Municipality 891228 Complaints 891228 Telephone Information 121 Directory Assistance 121 Overseas Calls 011230 Central Amman Telephone 891228 Repairs 891228 Abdul Telephone Repairs 891228 Jordan Television 774111 Radio Jordan 774111 Water Authority 891228 Jordan Electricity Authority 891228 Complaints 891228 RJ Flight Information 1865230	
HOSPITALS Queen Alia Int'l Airport 1865230 AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 811813 Khalil Maternity J. Ann 642816 Akil Maternity J. Ann 642817 Jafar Amman Maternity 642818 Maternity J. Amman 642819 Palestine Shmoun 642820 Shmoun Hospital 642821 University Hospital 642822 Al-Muhsin Hospital 642823 Tis. Hama. Akil 642824 Al-Ahli, Abdali 642825 Italian, Al-Muhsin 774111 Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 774112 Arm. Mada 891228 Queen Alia Hospital 891229 Amal Hospital 642830 ZARQA: Zafra Govt. Hospital 10198322 Zafra National Hospital 10198323 Ibn Nafis Hospital 10198324 Al-Hana Medical Hospital 10198325 IRBID: Princess Reema Hospital 10219555 Govt. Jubayl Hospital 10219556 Ibn Nafis Hospital 10219557 AQABA: Prince Faysal Hospital 10319411	
FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09) 5200-5, where it should always be verified. ARRIVALS Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) 07:10 Beirut (RJ) 07:15 Damascus (RJ) 07:20 Jeddah (RJ) 07:30 Riyadh (RJ) 07:35 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 07:40 Beirut (RJ) 07:45 Khartoum (SD) 07:50 New Dehli (RJ) 07:55 London (add) (RJ) 08:00 London (add) (RJ)	
DEPARTURES Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) 09:00 Beirut (RJ) 11:00 London (add) (RJ) 11:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ) 11:35 Rome (RJ) 11:40 Rome (add) (RJ) 11:45 London (RJ) 12:05 Rome (add) (RJ) 12:10 London (RJ) 12:15 Frankfurt (RJ) 12:45 Cairo (RJ) 12:50 Dhahran (RJ) 12:55 Bahrain, Doha (RJ) 13:00 Doha, Karachi (RJ) 13:05 Damascus (RJ) 13:10 Abu Dhabi (RJ) 13:15 Beirut (RJ)	
Other Flights (Terminal 2) 09:35 Cairo (MS) 10:00 Khartoum (SD) 12:25 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF) 18:45 Doha (EM) 01:15 Amsterdam (KL)	
MARKET PRICES Upper/lower price in Jds per kg. Apple 700/400 Banana 600 Banana (Mukammal) 620 Beans 600/400 Cabbage 200/100 Carrot 200/100 Cauliflower 180/100 Lemon 200/100 Cucumber (large) 120/200 Cucumber (small) 200/100 Eggplant 200/100 Garlic 200/100 Grape Fruit 180/100 Lemon 200/100 Marrow (small) 100/100 Onion 200/100 Onion (dry) 200/100 Onion (green) 200/100 Pepper (hot) 200/100 Pepper (sweet) 200/100 Potato 200/100 Radish 200/100 Tomato 200/100 Spinach 200/100	



Jordan insists on securing water rights in peace talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Any solution to the Jordanian-Israeli conflict in the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks will inevitably have to address Jordan's water shortage problem, Munther Haddadin, water expert and member of the Jordanian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, said Sunday.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Haddadin said article three of the agenda of the Jordanian-Israeli bilateral talks, which was concluded recently, states that both sides should get their legitimate share of water resources shared by them.

The issue will be discussed in official talks between the two sides as soon as the coming round of the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks starts, he said.

Dr. Haddadin said Jordan would focus in the negotiations on a sub-agenda which would include all the points related to the water of the Yarmouk and the Jordan rivers.

Jordan, he said, has rights to international rivers it is sharing with other countries in accordance with international charters. But, he added, the Jordan River's tributaries in Jordanian territory, south of the Yarmouk River, are internal valleys, whose water had been used since the 1950s to irrigate lands in the eastern Jordan valley, and thus, are considered Jordanian waters.

Reviewing Jordan's plans to exploit the Jordan River, Dr. Haddadin said Jordan has prepared a plan to use the river and its tributaries in 1939 and

the plan aimed mainly at irrigating lands in the eastern Jordan Valley. The plan was updated in 1950 for the same purpose.

On the other side of the river, before the establishment of Israel, the Jewish agency had drawn counterplans for the use of the Jordan River. Following the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, Israel had drawn two more plans, he added.

The Israeli plans had always clashed with the Jordanian ones, and even the Israeli ambitions in Arab water had exceeded the borders of Palestine and included plans to use the Litani River in Lebanon, he said.

Dr. Haddadin noted that Israel draws water from the

Jordan River to the Palestinian coast for agricultural projects and even to the Negev Desert to reform lands while the Jordanian water plans have only concentrated on the use of the river's water in the Jordan Valley basin itself.

Israel's attempts to control Arab waters continued after 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and the Golan Heights, and the Israelis put under their control most of the Jordan River's sources and tributaries north of Tiberias Lake, he said.

He added that Israel also managed to control the sources of the Yarmouk River after the 1967 war, thus violating all international standards and charters on the use of joint water sources.

Agreement signed to restore and develop Islamic sites

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Sunday signed an agreement with a representative of a local engineering group to prepare plans, designs and documents for developing and restoring areas where mosques and tombs of prophet Mohammad's companions are located. Prince Ra'd, who chairs a Royal Committee in charge of restoration of the tombs and mosques of the Prophet's companions, said the project comes in response to His Majesty King Hussein's directives to develop and restore these places. Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who is also vice president of the Royal commission, said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the agreement covers two projects: The tombs of the Prophet's companions in South Jordan and Irbid's Grand Mosque.

The tombs development project includes restoration of the tombs and their sites in the south of Jordan and the construction of a new mosque in addition to setting up gardens and a new agricultural road linking the tomb sites with Mutah battle site, in Mazra'a. Dr. Abbadi said the agreement covers three major areas:



Prince Ra'd, the minister of public and housing and other senior officials view designs for

the restoration and development of Islamic sites (Petra photo)

The general structure plan, which involves infrastructure services and studies on the new constructions, including the construction of a new mosque in the tombs area and the construction of gardens and courts.

Dr. Abbadi noted that the agreement's duration is 48 weeks, and that the first tender will be floated in August. On the development of Irbid Grand Mosque, Dr. Abbadi said the project includes the preparation of studies and designs for the mosques area and new facilities attached to it.

Tender for the development of this mosque will be floated in June, according to Dr. Abbadi.

The signing ceremony was attended by Public Works and Housing Minister Abdul Razzaq Ensour and Awqaf Secretary-General Ahmad Helayel.

Potash company unveils expansion plans

GHOR AL SAFI (Petra) — The Arab Potash Company (APC) has prepared an investment and production plan until the year 2000 and the APC board has endorsed the investment programme and the capital spending totalling JD 380 million according to APC chairman Ali Ensour.

The 1994 budget estimated that JD 73.3 million would finance production expenses on the basis that APC will this year produce 1.6 million tonnes of potash yielding a pre-tax profit of JD 21.1 million.

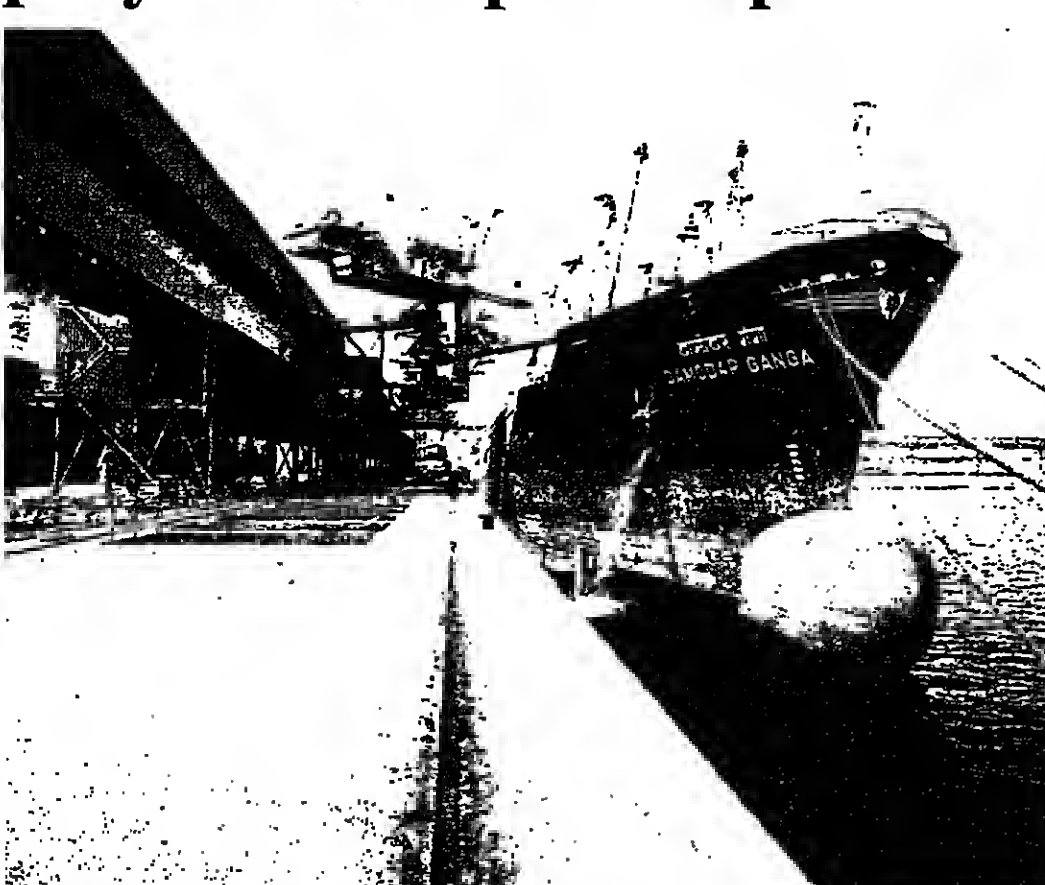
Capital spending was estimated at JD 79.8 million in 1994 to cover the cost of financing the expansion project and the commencement of work on chemical industries according to Mr. Ensour, who was addressing a press conference here Saturday.

The capital expenditure will cover upgrading the machinery and other equipment used in the production of potash, with the aim of raising production capacity to JD 1.8 million tonnes annually.

Mr. Ensour noted that work on expanding the facilities to increase production was expected to end in the first half of this year.

Under the plan, noted Mr. Ensour, several types of chemical industries will be carried out in cooperation with a specialised American firm and the Jordanian private sector.

APC, he pointed out, follows a system by which strict



A ship loads Jordanian potash at Aqaba (file photo)

control over the operations and expenses is adopted in order to be able to compete with other world producers of potash. He noted that the price of potash has dropped by 20 per cent from 1992 levels.

APC Managing Director

Suleiman Hawari said the general investment and production plan took into consideration that the potash production volume would become 1.5 million tonnes to be sold to other countries at the rate of \$85 per tonne.

He said APC expects the construction of additional facilities would be completed by the end of 1997.

He added that the APC board expects an overall revenue of JD 89 million at the end of this year.

Al Aswaq selects Prince Hassan 'man of the year'

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Aswaq Arabic Daily has chosen His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as the "1993 man of the year" for his outstanding performance in a number of areas.

A 15-member selection panel, comprising the newspaper's editorial board and well-known academics, have identified five areas among others where Prince Hassan's performance was outstanding. These areas include: the Crown Prince's understanding of the historical context as a complete whole and avoiding selectivity in adopting positions and his ability to achieve the major goal of the national economic reform programme which resulted in an international consent to reduce Jordan's foreign debt.

In this context, the newspaper cited the Crown Prince's talks with the American administration, the World Bank,

the International Monetary Fund and his meetings with the European Community and Japanese officials, on Jordan's indebtedness.

Prince Hassan's ability to penetrate the siege which Jordan has been subjected to over the past three years, through the different meetings of the Arab Thought Forum was also another area where Prince Hassan's performance was outstanding, the paper said. The other points of strength included the Crown Prince's concept of comprehensive security which combines both political and economic agendas. Al Aswaq also noted in particular Prince Hassan's performance in dealing with the Palestinian people and addressing the issue of Jerusalem, as well as his daily demonstrations of democratic work and institutional mentality.



Arab interior ministers meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Salameh Hamad left Amman for Tunisia Sunday to head Jordanian's delegation to the meetings of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers due to open Monday.

In a statement prior to his departure, Mr. Hamad said the council's meeting was of extreme importance because of the current situation prevailing in the Arab region and the efforts being exerted to mend Arab rifts.

The Arab interior ministers, he said, would discuss in their three-day meetings several issues, mainly an Arab agreement on combatting drug trafficking which was prepared by a committee of Arab lawyers and specialists in order to be adopted by all Arab countries.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Wijdan opens exhibition

IRBID (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali Sunday opened an art exhibition by Jordanian artist Basem Badarnab at Irbid's Tareq Ben Ziyad Park. The exhibition, which will last for several days, includes paintings depicting natural sites and traditional life in Jordan. Princess Wijdan also chaired a meeting at the park for the founding constituency of the Irbid Haya Centre. Princess Wijdan stressed at the meeting the need to prepare a clear philosophy outlining the goals of the centre.

Amareh opens art exhibition

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for the minister of culture, the ministry's Secretary-General Mohammad Naji Amareh Sunday opened an art exhibition by the Sudanese artist Abdul Qader Al Bakbit held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC). On display are 40 paintings reflecting daily life in the Arab and Islamic world in general, and Sudan in particular.

University to take part in meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Al Al Bait University will take part in the first meeting on developing resources of Islamic architecture and arts, organised by the Aghakhan Programme for Islamic Architecture and Art of Harvard University. The meeting will be held in Istanbul next week. Representing the university at the meeting will be Mohammad Al Assad from the Higher Institute for Islamic Architecture and Art.

PLA commander congratulates King

AMMAN (Petra) — Commander of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in Jordan, Abdul Rahim Oudieh, Sunday sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein, congratulating him on the new year and voicing pride in the King's honourable stands towards the Palestinian people. Brigadier Oudieh voiced appreciation for King Hussein's continuous support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and for his stand towards Jerusalem.

Municipality lights 40 kilometres of roads

AMMAN (Petra) — The municipality of Greater Amman Saturday lit 40 kilometres as part of the municipality's plans to light main roads. According to Greater Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi, more roads will be lit during the first three months of this year. The total cost of the road electrification project is JD 1.4 million, he said.

Sunday is a religious holiday

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will observe Al Israa Wal Mi'raj anniversary, which commemorates the day when Prophet Mohammad ascended to heaven, Sunday Jan. 9. In observance of the occasion, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, issued a communique ordering the closure of all government departments, ministries and public institutions.

Police investigating 'mysterious' death of 28-year-old man

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police in Ghor Al Safi are investigating the possibility of a 28-year-old man being killed on New Year's eve.

A.A.M. was declared dead upon arrival to Ghor Al Safi Hospital of head injury.

A close friend of the victim, identified as T. N., told the police that he had invited the victim for dinner at one of their friends' house on New Year eve. After dinner the group had some drinks to celebrate the new year and then they all went to sleep, according to the police report.

T.N. told the police he went to wake A.A.M. the next morning and discovered that "he was in a coma". A.A.M. was carried to Ghor Al Safi Hospital

by civil defence officers but was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Preliminary investigations by police said the friends of the victim were surprised of his death, because, they said, the victim had no enemies and he was liked by everyone. Police are investigating the case.

Man gets shot

In another case, a 48-year-old man was carried to Jordan University Hospital, Friday, after being shot accidentally by a group of people celebrating the new year's day, according to a police report.

M.A.S. told police that after eating dinner at Al Humar Park he went to buy cigarettes when he was shot accidentally by a group of people who were celebrating the new year in an area nearby.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisman" at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Suha Mash'al at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Abdul Jabbar Salman on bedouin culture at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrelnissa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Fuzun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

FILM AND DRAMA

- ★ Film entitled "The Wall" at the Phoenix Gallery, for Art and Culture at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

King: Jordan resisting pressures

(Continued from page 1)

unexpected visit on Thursday.

"We told him it was the last chance from our side, and after that let each side carry the responsibility on his own," the King said.

King Hussein also said that he had asked Mr. Arafat to stop referring to a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Mr. Arafat, who had kept the Kingdom and his other Arab partners in the dark over the secret talks with Israel that led to the Sept. 13 self-rule accord, has been arguing that Jordan should not worry about his moves since a confederation is the ultimate goal.

"I have requested my brother (Arafat) to drop the expression of confederation from his dictionary and not to discuss it in any form or manner," said the King.

King Hussein said the shape of Jordanian-Palestinian relations was an issue for the future. "Our enemies and ignorant elements as well as other parties have exploited the talk of confederation to undermine the special (Jordanian-Palestinian) relationship."

"Jordan can only support the PLO with all its energies if there is a clearly defined path which means that commitment is commitment... and not in a whirlwind of talk that does not produce real results," King Hussein said.

The King said the PLO leader promised him PLO Jordanian committees set up before the PLO-Israel accord but never activated would begin meeting on Tuesday.

"I don't now... but I pray to God the brothers will be up to the level needed, I advised them lately and tried telling them that the situation has changed," he said.

The King also rejected reports that Jordan favoured continued Israeli control of crossing points between the Kingdom and the West Bank.

"We reproach our brethren for such reports."

he said. "It is not logical that Jordan wants Israeli control over the bridges (across the River Jordan) and the crossing points."

Following are major excerpts from the King's speech:

We are doing everything possible along with other Arab states to deal with outstanding issues with the aim of achieving security, stability and peace.

We are therefore reexamining everything in the light of our means and our potentials, and the chances for this aim are feasible and could help to attain development. Therefore, the study of the situation is continuing on our side in cooperation with the other parties.

In a quick review of the past, the Kingdom, since its creation, has been striving to achieve the best for the Arabs because it is part of this nation facing tragedies and sharing with Arab countries their catastrophes.

It defended the Palestinian land and people with the country's Armed Forces taking part in the 1948 and 1967 wars helping to save the major part of Palestinian land left for the

Palestinian people.

There were attempts to marginalise the role of the Armed Forces, but all these attempts have failed. In the 1950s the Jordanian Armed Forces were Arabised when changes were introduced to the army's leaders to play a leading role in Arab efforts to liberate Arab lands.

In 1967, and after the first Arab summit in Cairo, the PLO was born, Jordan was facing continued Israeli aggression allegedly in reply to Jordanian attacks coming from Jordan. Therefore we reached an understanding for collective Arab action in defence of Arab lands. We expressed that any aggression on any Arab state should be confronted by the Arab countries together.

The eyes are now focused on the Jordanian-Palestinian relations which have been distinguished relations over the years. But hostile forces, including Arab forces and Palestinians as well, striving to sow seeds of dissent and discord, adversely affecting the bilateral relations.

In my belief, had we not entered the 1967 war, an inter-

nal explosion would have occurred and then the chance would have opened for Israel to occupy this country.

Since the 1967 war, we have been struggling to regain the lost lands first through a joint Arab command, and we were told that we should struggle to regain the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza. Arab leaders agreed that no single Arab country should reach a separate peace with Israel but through a comprehensive solution on all tracks.

We are trying hard to regain the occupied territories and not to be left under international supervision, but regrettably the PLO was chosen in 1974 to serve as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In other words, the PLO have replaced Jordan to deal with the question of regaining the occupied lands.

When the question of peace was put forth for discussion we entered the process under a joint Jordanian-Palestinian umbrella to see that U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 implemented but with the separate Israeli-PLO deal we had to cast off the idea of joint delegation because there was no need to continue the joint effort. So as to remain committed to the Arab summit decision of 1974 of giving the PLO the sole right to deal with the issue, we decided to support the PLO leadership's agreement concluded in Oslo.

Peace is not a matter of talk on paper or a document signed before the negotiations start. We should discuss everything and once we have reached an acceptable and reasonable result, the peace that we seek would have been achieved.

We face Israeli pressure but we will not succumb to what we see as unjust. We will bow only to Almighty God.

We will continue to provide backing to the Palestinian people but we cannot keep moving in a vicious circle without any objective and we should follow a course that is clearly defined which also should meet commitments.

Kaddoumi to lead PLO team

(Continued from page 1)

sides will need to iron out.

The PLO leadership was supposed to decide this week on how to deal with a draft economic agreement that defines Jordan's role and relationship with the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the interim period.

Mr. Arafat has been hesitant to sign the agreement lest Israel could use it to turn down his demand for setting up an independent Palestinian central bank as a symbol of Palestinian sovereignty.

Jordanian officials, however, do not accept this argument. They point out that in the absence of a clear provision in the agreement giving monetary powers to the Palestinian authority, the Palestinians would have practically to choose between total control by the Israeli central bank or

an agreement with the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

In his comments on Jordan Television Sunday, Dr. Anani referred to Jordan's stand towards a peace treaty with Israel.

He said King Hussein's vision and foresightedness have always proved valid in most cases if not all the time.

A peace treaty could be signed only when all issues of concern, including water, people, refugees, security and displaced persons, are settled.

"It is then, when we become sure that peace will be comprehensive and just, talk about a peace treaty will have a meaning," Dr. Anani said.

"King Hussein has always called for rallying Arab ranks and mobilising Arab resources to serve the battle for peace, and make the Israeli power unable to dominate the great Arab circle," Dr. Anani said.

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Islam — a religion, a political force and more

By Izzat R. Dajani

MOST COUNTRIES in the Middle East have transformed from relatively traditional societies to relatively modern societies. This came about as a result of the 19th and 20th century imperialism and economic change. No allowance was made then for the incorporation of Islamic political movements in this modernisation process, leading to a diminished role of Islam in public life. People identified their political aspirations in national rather than religious expressions, leaving to Islam the role of personal faith. This led to the emergence of Islamic political movements that rejected the separation between religion, nationality and state. They further demanded the return to the comprehensive Islamic state as a representation of their political, religious and social identity. The intelligentsia and the urban lower classes were among those groups that found great appeal in these movements. They wanted to change the world they lived in. They made Islam as their way of life, the expression of one's self and the superordinate of all their goals and aspirations.

Islam regulates life and makes society. It cares for its individuals and is amenable to assign them different roles in life. The state draws its strength and power from Islam. The Islamic empire that extended from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas was a result of the unity of spirit and self in every Muslim. "Islam was the essential factor, the only bond to unify the people, the Muslims, and if this bond became the focus of their lives and loyalty, forces of solidarity would emerge and make possible the creation of a strong state," Al Afghani wrote.

In order to understand the influence of Islam over politics, it is imperative to be able to appreciate the history of the birth of Islam and its evolution. Islam has thirteen centuries of history. The Koran is the Holy Book and is a collection of all revelations that God bestowed upon Muhammad, the Prophet. The words of God constitute the message intended for the people of God. The Sunna is the "example" of the Prophet. It was also understood by some Muslims as the family of the Prophet, which led in turn to the largest degree of disagreement in the Islamic community. They wanted the family of Prophet Muhammad to continue leading the Muslims after his death. The majority of Muslims, however, saw in this a contradiction to Islamic principles whereby

the community ruled by Ijma'a (consensus). Ali, Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law by his marriage to Fatima, was the father to Muhammad's only two grandsons to teach maturity, Hasan and Hussein. When Prophet Muhammad died, the Muslims appointed Abu Bakr as Caliph (ruler) by Ijma'a, rejecting the rule by kinship to the Prophet, as in Ali's case. Then came Umar, followed by Uthman, and eventually Ali became Caliph. The descendants of Ali kept a special standing in the Muslim World. They were distinguished and held in great esteem and respect, as their ancestors extended back to Ali's sons and hence to Prophet Muhammad. Their role in Islamic history is important and the living examples today are Hussein (the King of Jordan) and Hassan (the King of Morocco). By opposing the transition of power outside the dynasty of Muhammad, Shi'ism came into being and became the symbol of opposition to claims to legitimacy and state. The majority of Arabs remained to be Sunnis, and hence the Shiites concentrated their influence on non-Arab Muslims, as in Iran today.

Iran's fundamentalism and Islamic militancy constitute the best living example of Shiite rejection of the authority of secular governments. Shi'ism articulated social discontent and political protest. It saw itself as representing the persecuted minority. The Shiites believed they were the righteous few dominated by the wrongful majority. The Koran was passed on to them by the Prophet and the 12 Imams (successors to the Prophet). They have a special knowledge of the Holy Book and the martyrdom of their first leader, Hussein, is their model of self-sacrifice. This has become their means for achieving Islamic goals. The religious leaders in present day Iran expressed this fully in their war with Iraq and in their presence in some parts of Lebanon (offering financial and logistic help to Lebanese Shiites). "Since Iran is the only state to have begun to implement 'true' Islam, it is thought to be the world's only legitimate state, with a unique obligation of facilitating the worldwide implementation of Islamic law. Force and violence are not only acceptable but necessary means of doing so," the International Herald Tribune commented on Oct. 18, 1984.

Saudi Arabia is the other extreme to Iran's Shi'ism. It is the place where Prophet Muhammad was born and from where Islam had

spread. The Koran is the constitution and the Sharia's (Islamic law) is the country's source of laws and regulations. To Saudis, Islam is the political-religious base from which their identity is expressed. Saudi Arabia commands a special status to more than 80 million Muslims in the world today.

The effect of Islam is best expressed by the presence of the ulama (religious scholars) and their public forum every Friday. They hold very influential views that can effect social, political, economical and cultural issues. They have access to the highest authority and can exert a lot of power. Islam in Saudi Arabia is a way of life in every respect. It characterises the religious life of every Muslim. Saudi foreign policy and international behaviour are examples of the role Islam plays in Saudi Arabia political moves. The Islamic conference is also of great importance and reflects a great deal of Saudi "nationalist-religious" attitude and aspirations. The International Islamic Conference in Mecca in 1962 declared: "Those who disavow Islam and distort its call under the guise of nationalism are actually the most bitter enemies of the Arabs whose glories are inseparable from the glories of Islam." However, Saudi Arabia remains to be an authoritarian government irrespective of its Islamic teachings. Secular influences are present in the country, leaving a wide gap between the official political stance and daily activity. Social and religious tensions are surfacing more and more. The Saudi royal family draws its authority and legitimacy from its custodianship of the two holy mosques. This is another classical case of Islam politicisation.

The Middle East is a reservoir for the writings and influences of many thinkers and idealists. They mostly seem to either have emerged from or expressed their thoughts in Egypt or the Fertile Crescent. Two opposing and different characteristics prevail in the Middle East. The modernisation process is faced with a growing power in calling for the return to Islamic values. These values have different effects on different nations. These are further complicated by the presence of widely differing social classes with opposing ideologies as to what constitutes the basis for nationalism: Arab unity or Islam. It is important to note that Islam was politicised from its early days as the Islamic calendar started its first year when the Muslims left Mecca for Medina to become a political community. To be a Muslim is to

join this community that constitutes a society operating according to God's revelations to Prophet Muhammad.

Muslims society has a remarkable solidarity; the loyalty and cohesion of its members are intense. A good Muslim is not one whose belief conforms to a given pattern, but one whose commitment may be expressed in practical terms that conform to an accepted code." Wilfred Smith wrote in 1957.

The Abbasid dynasty ruled from Baghdad over a great empire. The spread of its political authority over a vast geographical area led to eventual decentralised power structures and political units. Baghdad fell in the 13th century, and the empire came to its end. Then came the Ottoman (Turkish) rule which found in Islam, and in remaining religious, the key factor of survival as a political entity. World War I made it possible for Arab nationalists to demand independence from the Ottoman rule. But whenever Arab lands were "liberated", they were placed under foreign colonisation, and were made into small and weak states, depriving the Arabs of their promised unity. Had nationalism been allowed to mature peacefully and slowly without foreign intervention, its trends and character would have assumed a different form. Islam was criticised by the West as being backward and unable to cope with modern advancements in science and technology. The West failed to understand the powerful political weapon that Islam possessed. This, in part, led to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in which there was a call for the return to the old teachings of Islam, in the face of the "modern" powers.

Al Afghani (who lived in Egypt 1871-1879) called for the unity of Muslims so they could build up strength against the European powers. He attacked the weak governments of the Muslim community, as they became exploited and weak. This can be seen as a clear moment of awakening to Islam as a political power and can be an indication of the arousal of militancy in Islam in the face of corrupt rulers and foreign influences. Pan-Islamism became the focus for the politicised Islam and called for all devout Muslims to adhere to the principles of Islam as a means of strength, unity and identity. Rasid Rida (1865-1935) was a strong believer in Arab nationalism; he differentiated between the "Arab Muslim", Umma (nation) and the Muslim Turks. He spoke of the Arabs being responsible for the spread and glory of Islam. Sati' Al Husri concentrated

his efforts and intellectualism on the compatibility of Arab nationalism and Islam, in which the former would support and promote the latter.

The language in which Islam was revealed was Arabic, Islam provides the Arab society with its spiritual message that can transform it into a force for the progress towards Arab nationalism. It is important to mention that Islam was born as a world-transforming religion and became embodied into the Arab societies of the Middle East, not in a religious capacity alone, but as a way of life and a political expression of one's thoughts. "Islam is inseparable from Arab nationalism and it is the duty of all Arab nationalists to uphold and venerate it and to sanctify the memory of Prophet Muhammad and interest themselves in Islam," Constantin Zuriaq, a Christian Arab nationalist wrote in 1939 in Beirut.

Increased nationalism was further expressed by many non-Muslim thinkers, writers and intellectuals. Khalil Iskandar Qubrusi, a Christian Orthodox, wrote that primitive Christianity which had originated in the East was corrupted by the Europeans who were seeking to dominate the Eastern Christians. "Arab Christians need to return to their pure original Christianity" he concluded.

Today, the Arab World is governed by different political systems. Where political parties are absent, Islam takes the form of the "unofficial" people's party. It becomes the forum for expression of the nation's demands. In Jordan, the Islamic movement won a large share of the seats in Parliament during the Nov. 1989 elections. The Jordanian elections for the professional unions are run on secular and Islamic grounds, with a clear tilt of power for the latter during the last ten years. Further classical examples can be drawn from Algeria, Sudan and many others.

In summation, the words of Roy Muttahedei at Harvard University provide the best analysis for present day Islam: "Most Muslims came to see the utility of a clear distinction between the actual and the ideal. They were willing to live with their actual, very imperfect governments as long as they could cherish their ideal. This ideal preserved a sense of community that could survive repeated changes of governments and conflicts of interest among Muslims. This sense of community even in the face of the terrifically powerful and divisive force of modern nationalism, is very much alive today."

Flirting with the fiscal sin

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

WHEN THE Jordanian government indulged in foreign borrowing for the past ten years or more, politicians used to calm down those scared of an approaching crisis and assure them that our Arab brethren in particular, and our international friends in general, would never allow a small, friendly country like Jordan to reach the point of crisis. At the last moment they claimed, massive foreign and Arab aid will flow to the country from Arab oil producing countries, the Americans, and others. A simple tour in the Gulf capitals will do the trick.

When the crisis did come, late in 1988, none of the above could care less. We found no alternative but to submit to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands. Politicians and decision-makers were obviously dead wrong, but the entire people of Jordan paid the price of that fatal mistake and are still paying.

After this bitter experience, we still have some people who dare tell us that foreign grants are definitely coming, irrespective of our economic behaviour. If we abandon the economic adjustment programme, they theorise, American, European, and Japanese financial assistance will not be affected, because their assistance is based on political considerations.

Lately we were told that we should not be afraid of increasing the salaries of the civil servants, or widening the deficit, because the IMF is committed to reschedule all our debts and to finance our foreign exchange gap. In other words, we can spend generously to satisfy our social needs because the funds will be secured whether the deficit is small or big.

If we deprive the government employees of a desirable salary increase, we only spare the IMF's money.

Such false and irresponsible talk may find some happy audience because it rids some of the guilt of committing their sin. But does this argument make sense? Why should the donors give us their tax-payers' money, irrespective of our financial behaviour and why should they try to help us if we are not ready to help ourselves? Why should the IMF cover the gap in our foreign exchange budget if we do not adhere to our own commitments under the programme, including reduction of budget deficit on yearly basis? Is the IMF so naive?

The fiscal target for 1993 was a reduction of deficit to the level of 6.4 per cent of the GDP. However, favourable circumstances made it possible to beat the target and reduce the deficit to 6.2 per cent of the GDP. As a reward for this achievement, the reduction of the deficit in 1994 was targeted at 5.2 per cent of GDP. Jordan's effort for the year 1994 is to be 1 per cent of GDP — which is, by no means, a tough job to accomplish.

The draft budget of 1994 was based on satisfying this requirement. According to other ways of reading the budget, the deficit may be a little bit higher and the Ministry of Finance should exert extra efforts during the year to make the actual performance better than the budget and the deficit no more than 5.2 per cent of the GDP.

It is on this background that the idea of yet another salary increase came, which, if implemented, will raise the deficit to 7.7 per cent of the GDP. One would be unrealistic to expect the IMF to go to Paris Club next month to put pressure on creditors to postpone or reduce their debts in order to enable the government of Jordan to enhance the life style of its ministers and improve the standard of living of its inflated bodies of civilian and military personnel, who got their last increase seven months ago, and to boost the popularity of the government, the deputies, and some press commentators.

Unfortunately, the government issued the wrong signal and unnecessary created expectations, but the damage did not happen yet and it should not be a way out of this mistake. Both the government and the Parliament should act responsibly.

Finally, some response

PLO CHAIRMAN Yasser Arafat has every right to demand and work for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and, we think, his people will eventually get what they want. But he must have realised by now that for the Israelis to agree to such an eventuality, and for the world community to bless it, the PLO leader needs to play his cards right, wait for a while and give priority to building Palestinian institutions that would be mature and healthy enough to deliver such a state.

In undertaking this major task, Mr. Arafat cannot afford to alienate everybody he knows. There are a few toes around, anyway, that he can step on. On the other hand, he has every reason to cultivate the support of especially those who are most ready and willing to help him achieve full rights. Jordan is on top of the list of those countries which not only back the PLO-Israel agreement, but whose national security also depends on the success of the accord. True, Jordan is not yet ready to discuss a confederation with Chairman Arafat, simply because such a link can take place only between sovereign states, but there is no question that the Kingdom is fully committed to helping our Palestinian brethren in their quest for realising their legitimate rights, including self-determination and statehood.

Jordan, however, has its own interests, which, incidentally or otherwise, in no way clash with Palestinian aspirations for independence. Furthermore, what the leadership of this country has been asking of the PLO leader is no more than what Mr. Arafat himself has been demanding of other Arabs, namely coordination and cooperation on vital issues.

It was the Palestinians who insisted right from the beginning of the Madrid talks in the fall of 1991 on full coordination among the Arab parties to the peace process: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. As a result of its secret agreement with Israel the PLO managed to alienate Syria and, by extension, Lebanon. Jordan, as the PLO is fully aware, has not taken such a position. To the contrary, it has forgiven Mr. Arafat for reaching a separate deal with Israel, and His Majesty the King went as far as congratulating the PLO leader on his courage in reaching the Oslo accords.

But while Mr. Arafat might understandably be occupied with everything under the sun, he must remember that the mind of the Jordanian leadership is set on guarding the real interests of an Arab state, whose wellbeing is of vital interest to the cause of Palestine. Whatever agreement the Palestinians reach or fail to reach with the Israelis is going to have its consequences on Jordan. Therefore, coordination among the two parties is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The Palestinian leadership certainly realises that it has a stake in a strong Jordan both during the transitional period and afterwards. And that is why the arrival here this week of a delegation to start real coordination should be such a welcome change.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the beginning of a new year, Al Ra'i Arabic daily said we had thought 1993 would carry with it peace in our region, but the year has passed by without the fulfilment of our aspirations and hopes. We had thought the year 1993 would end on a positive note and would witness real progress in the peace negotiations with Israel, but these hopes have been dashed, largely due to Israel's intransigence, the paper continued. Contrary to these hopes of the Palestinians and the Arabs in general nothing was achieved and no progress was ever attained, added the paper. Arab negotiators last year were involved in extensive talks with the Israelis in Washington and other parts of the world, but all their efforts have gone in vain due to Israel's adamant stand, according to the paper. The result is that all these endeavours have ended in nought, to the great frustration of the Palestinians in the first place, added Al Ra'i. On the other hand, Arab leaders are still at odds and their countries are ignoring the fact that only through solidarity they can regain their usurped rights and occupied lands, the paper pointed out. At present, the Arab states are in need of solidarity at a time when they are trying to cope with the so-called new world order and Israel's aggression on and occupation of Arab land, said the paper. This is happening at a time when Iraq remains suffering from the U.N.-imposed sanctions, exposing the people to further sufferings, it argued. The paper said that there is no alternative to solidarity and serious efforts to end this situation in 1994.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily discussed the plight of Al Muhajireen District, near Ras Al Ain — one of the oldest districts of Amman — which is threatened to be demolished soon by Amman Municipality under the excuse of developing that part of the capital. Is demolishing of 86 homes, 30 stores, two schools, a factory and an old mosque a civilised way to achieve development, asked Isam Qadmani. Years back, the municipality cleared the way for the capital to stretch westwards, only to discover later that by doing so Jordan had lost valuable agricultural land that used to contribute to food production, said Qadmani.

Many Gazans sceptic negotiations are solution

By Samia Nakhoul
Reuters

GAZA — PLO leader Yasser Arafat's plans to take over from Israel occupation in the Gaza Strip are of no consequence to Muslim militants. They answer to a higher authority — Islam.

Under a September peace deal, Israel will eventually redeploy in the Gaza Strip and abandon densely populated areas to Mr. Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation. But Muslim activists expect little solace from the changing of the guard.

"The main issue is not to give us more food and more money. We need an identity and the PLO cannot provide us with an identity. Islam is the solution," said Moussa Morei, 25.

"The PLO leadership has lost touch with people here. They live in another planet. They have a lavish lifestyle," said Magdi Akcel, a Muslim activist.

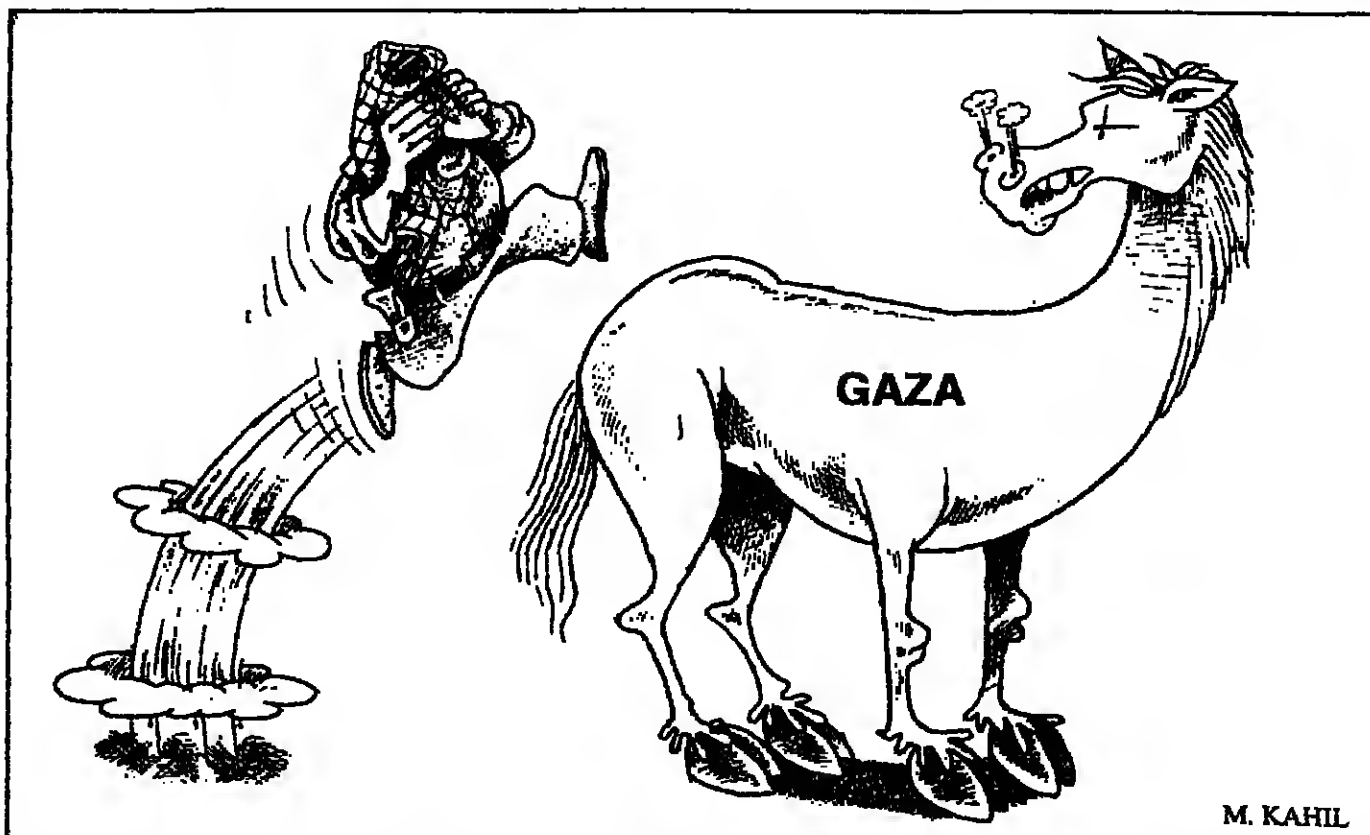
"They drive Mercedes cars. They eat with forks and knives. They forgot the life of poverty that exists here. I worry about the shock of the people from this leadership which is coming here," he said.

Hamas, the PLO's leading rival in an uprising against Israel that erupted six years ago, is the strongest and militarily most active and popular Islamic group in the strip. Only the most religious Muslims, free of crime and corruption, are allowed membership in Hamas.

Hamas opposes the peace deal and is devoted to destroying the Jewish state. It receives funds from abroad, including Iran, according to both Palestinian and Israeli sources.

With the misery, poverty and oppression Islam takes on an added importance in people's lives.

Muslim militant groups have already established a network



of social, educational, health, economic and judicial societies to ease life for a people that have suffered through nearly 27 years of occupation.

With an eye to the future, Islamic societies run about 23 kindergartens across Gaza, educating 8,000 children, most of them sons of martyrs or prisoners. Children as young as six are taught to memorise the Koran.

Muslim scholars known as "reconciliators" act as judges in the absence of civil courts. They rule in family feuds, crimes, robberies, divorce, inheritance, adultery and property ownership issues, their rulings are based on Islamic Sharia law.

"In cases of homicide, the killer will pay blood money to the parents of the victim. The

sum should be the equivalent to the price of 100 camels according to the Sharia," said Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Kujok, a prominent reconciliator.

He said the amount is decided by a committee of scholars. In a recent case of murder, the killer had to pay JD 48,000 (nearly \$71,000) to the victim's family.

"With casualties, we count the number of blows and injuries of the victim," Mr. Kujok said. "The amount of money will depend on how serious the blows are. Every stroke has its own price."

In the absence of police authority, militants enforce the decisions of the reconciliators. "We try to stop violations and lawlessness through persuasion and intimidation, by

making people return to their conscience," Mr. Kujok said. Dotted with ramshackle refugee camps, Gaza is home to the strip's 900,000 Palestinian observance of Islam.

Gaza women wear the Islamic code of dress — a headscarf and long dress. Alcohol is not openly on sale.

Men and women must not be seen together unless related. At the Islamic university, men and women attend separate campuses, and take turns in laboratories.

Misques and religious contests seem to offer the only entertainment for young people. An advertisement at the university announced a contest in memorising The Koran with a prize of JD 1,000 (about \$1,400).

"The university has a great role in Islamising the society. Its philosophy is to create a Muslim individual who will then make an Islamic family. This will help create an Islamic society through legitimate means," university official Ahmad Al Sarati told Reuters.

"When you achieve an Islamic society you will naturally have stronger influence in unions and institutions. Then eventually you can attain power and rule," he added.

By providing social services, Islamic societies win the hearts of many Gazans. "The Islamists live our suffering and endurance. They go down to the street. They share our agonies and miseries," said Jamil Abdallah, 37, of Jahalya refugee camp.

What to expect in 1994 from a world in turmoil

The Associated Press

NOW THAT the Soviet empire has fallen apart, some of its parts are falling apart. More political turmoil may lie ahead for mother Russia, too, given the sudden rise of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who speaks of nuking Russia's neighbours and taking Alaska back.

Although the dreaded big war never came, the belligerents of the world make up for it by starting little ones.

None of the new wars seem to end, but the combatants in some old ones may be getting tired. Steps toward peace are being taken in Northern Ireland, where the latest round of fighting among Protestants and Roman Catholics has stretched over 25 years, and between Israelis and Palestinians, who have been at it twice as long.

Commercially, the world is getting together: Europe keeps moving toward union, however slowly; the United States, Canada and Mexico embarked on a free trade agreement Jan. 1, and the 117 members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade finally struck a deal after seven years of manoeuvre and bickering.

A year ago, it appeared that the United Nations could become a global peacekeeper and stop at least the worst of the violence. That did not happen, and only a ghost of the hope remains.

The little wars are fought over territory, religion, ethnicity anything that has festered in enough hearts for enough generations.

While the vengeful kill each other, the merciful do their best to heal the wounded, feed the living and comfort the displaced. Thus, as another year begins, the human race continues on its contradictory way.

The Associated Press asked correspondents around the world for their assessments of what 1994 may hold. Here are their reports:

United Nations

Hopes that the United Nations would be the centrepiece of a new world order were dashed in 1993. Its dim prospects for this year include retreats on peacekeeping and a deeper financial crisis.

After great expectations at the end of the cold war, the United Nations has fallen on hard times. While it completed a major mission successfully in Cambodia last year, there were setbacks or failures in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti and Angola.

The cash shortage got worse and there is little chance of improvement. Charges of waste and mismanagement continue to be levelled at the bureaucracy.

"The United Nations renaissance remains in question," Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said in his annual report to the General Assembly in September.

U.N. forces often are thrust into conflicts where major powers "are not willing to venture themselves and are reluctant to make the hard choices posed by a new era of challenges to peace," he said.

The great disappointment was Somalia, where 30,000 peacekeepers were engaged in aggressive disarmament of factions and clashes with the forces of warlord Mohammed Farah Aided.

After 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in one battle, the United States announced that it would pull out by March 31, 1994. France, Belgium, Germany and Italy later said they also would withdraw. At year's end, the United Nations was desperately seeking replacements.

After Somalia, the United States was wary of U.N. undertakings. When 150 Haitian thugs fired in the air and chanted slogans, a U.S. ship carrying a small contingent of soldiers and police trainers sailed away from Port-au-Prince harbour without docking.

The U.N. mission to restrain police and soldiers and build public works projects never got off the ground.

In Bosnia, U.N. peacekeepers and relief workers continue to feed the hungry, but have not been able to halt Serb or Croat aggression. U.N. and

NATO forces have not used force to stop the fighting, although it was authorised, and an international peace plan collapsed.

Civil war returned to Angola, where only 74 U.N. peacekeepers remained. A larger U.N. force was unable to disarm combatants.

About 74,000 peacekeepers, police and others were deployed in 15 missions at year's end. Arrears by member states are about \$1.5 billion.

In his first U.N. address, in September, President Clinton said peacekeeping demands have greatly exceeded U.N. resources and called for restraint in undertaking new missions.

"The United Nations simply cannot become engaged in every one of the world's conflicts," he said. "If the American people are to say 'yes' to U.N. peacekeeping, the United Nations must know when to say 'no'."

Asian subcontinent

The Asian subcontinent is enjoying a period of political stability that may let its feuding nations work on their endemic problems of poverty, ethnic conflict and population growth.

India and Pakistan are starting talks on Kashmir, the disputed province with a Muslim majority that has caused two of their three wars since 1947. About 7,500 people have been killed in Kashmir since Muslim guerrillas began a separatist war against Hindu-dominated India four years ago.

The United States would like to see the negotiations expanded to include nuclear non-proliferation.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao of India leads a fragile minority government, but gained strength in state elections at the end of the year, stifling much of the dissent against his leadership.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, who returned to power in October, has the most stable government since democracy was restored in 1988.

To maintain its new stability, the subcontinent — home to the poorest one-fifth of humanity — must begin showing economic progress for the masses.

In Afghanistan, no end is in sight to fighting among rival Islamic factions that has cost more lives in two years than did the 13-year civil war against a Soviet-backed government.

Sri Lanka passed a painful test of its democracy in 1993 when its president was assassinated by a suicide bomber. Although the transition was smooth, the new government seems less willing to talk with leaders of an 11-year rebellion among the Tamil minority.

Democracy seems to have taken root in Nepal and Bangladesh, but both countries are desperately poor.

South Pacific

More than two centuries after the first white men arrived, Australia is coming to grips with its debt to aboriginal citizens.

In 1994, parliament will adopt legislation proposed by Prime Minister Paul Keating that recognises aboriginal land claims, but there may be prolonged legal challenges.

Most of the land is desert outback held by federal and state government. Mr. Keating has promised a fund to buy back privately held land, and a "social justice" reform package of health, education and job-creation programmes for aborigines, most of whom now live in the cities.

With the economy barely emerging from years of recession, the opposition will argue that the country cannot afford the expense.

New Zealand enters 1994 fresh from a November parliamentary election that cut the conservative National Party's majority to a single seat. That will frustrate efforts to reform what has become one of the world's most democratic economies, with cradle-to-grave benefits.

Because New Zealand still holds to its anti-nuclear position, its military relationship with the United States remains

difficult, but full diplomatic relations will be restored in 1994.

Papua New Guinea has halted a secessionist movement in Bougainville for five years. Past attempts at negotiation failed, and a new initiative this year is unlikely.

Prime Minister Sitiveni Pabuka of Fiji wants to revise the constitution to remove restrictions on the political rights of ethnic Indians, who make up nearly half the population.

After Mr. Rabuka led two coups in 1987, a new constitution was adopted that guaranteed rule by indigenous Fijians. Now he seeks to change it.

In December, several cabinet members defected to the opposition, forcing new elections scheduled for February.

Canada

Prime Minister Jean Chretien, elected in October, says he is going to put Quebec separatism on the back burner and turn Canada's attention to the economy.

Over a decade, Ottawa has expended endless energy trying to deal with the aspirations of the huge French-speaking province, to no avail.

With separatist sentiment on the rise, 54 Quebec nationalists providing the main House of Commons opposition and provincial elections approaching, the issue is not going to go away despite Mr. Chretien's wishful thoughts.

French-speakers, about 85 per cent of Quebec's 6.9 million people, have long felt like second-class citizens in a largely English-speaking country. Many fear for their French language and culture.

Quebec has yet to sign the 1982 constitution, and there have been two unsuccessful attempts at amending it to appease the province.

The separatist Bloc Quebecois won 54 of Quebec's 75 seats in the commons in October. If nationalists win the provincial elections in 1994, they promise a referendum on sovereignty within a year.

Mr. Chretien is right, however, when he says he has bigger fish to fry.

Unemployment is still above 11 per cent, the economy is struggling through a long recession and the budget deficit is growing. Social services such as unemployment insurance and the national health programme are on the edge of disaster.

If that is not enough, half a million Indians want self-rule: the Atlantic fishing industry is collapsing; environmentalists worry about chemicals, loggers and wolves; and the western province feel ignored.

Africa

War, poverty and disease will continue bringing misery to millions in Africa, but there is hope in a few trouble spots like South Africa, Angola and Mozambique.

Somalia is a question. U.S. troops, scheduled to withdraw by March 31, are the backbone of the U.N. force meant to end two years of civil war and famine. Despite peace talks that have included warlord Aided, observers fear clan fighting will resume as soon as the foreign troops leave.

South Africa holds its first election with universal suffrage in 1994, and the black majority is likely to make Nelson Mandela president. With its wealth and development, the new South Africa may serve as a sorely needed economic engine for the continent.

In Malawi, one of Africa's last old-style dictatorships seems on the way out, a victim of the democratic movement in Africa that began in 1990.

A cease-fire seems likely in Angola, where civil war has been killing 1,000 people a day by U.N. estimates, and in Mozambique, guerrillas have begun disarming under a U.N. arranged peace plan. But weapons from these warring conflicts are being rapidly smuggled throughout Africa.

Nigeria, the continent's most populous country, enters the year with a new military dictator, Gen. Sani Abacha, who has promised democracy while dismantling such democratic institutions as the National Assembly.

There is new tribal conflict in Burundi, and in Sudan, southerners enter their 11th year of fighting the Muslim-dominated north.

Much of Africa remains rife with tribal tension, poverty and corruption. There are few signs that democracy will make more than limited progress, although governments seem to be giving greater sway to free markets.

AIDS continues to spread, and malaria is a growing threat because of drug-resistant

strains.

The Middle East

Middle East peace negotiations will move forward in 1994. Syria, Lebanon and Jordan probably will join the Palestinians in making peace with Israel.

Transition from war to peace will generate problems that could be most evident in Syria. President Hafez Assad's minority Alawite regime will have to tread a precarious path towards political and economic reforms after decades of repression.

Rejectionists on both sides will continue trying to sabotage the U.S.-sponsored peace process.

Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, may have to crack down hard on radicals and Muslim fundamentalists who consider the peace accord a betrayal.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will face problems from Israelis who oppose giving up Arab lands occupied in the 1967 war.

The Far East

The Far East begins 1994 under the shadow of North Korea's refusal to comply with international nuclear controls.

Diplomatic negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang may decide whether East Asia embarks on a full-scale arms race or joins the global trend towards disarmament.

Despite the new tension on the peninsula, South Korea continues its own rapid transition to a civilian democracy.

China's rapid growth will continue, but its long-term economic health depends on painful reforms the government has promised to introduce. These include cutting subsidies to money-losing factories and remodelling the banking system.

In just three years, China regains control over Hong Kong. The British colony anticipates a bumpy year as Beijing and London argue over how much democracy can be introduced. A showdown could unsettle the economy, which has enjoyed the fruits of China's boom.

Taiwan's transformation from near-dictatorship to multiparty democracy continues as the island pushes for equal international status with China despite Beijing's efforts to isolate it diplomatically.

The new democratically elected government of Cambodia, still battling communist Khmer Rouge rebels, will start rebuilding its economy. Vietnam hopes full diplomatic relations will follow Washington's easing of the U.S. economic embargo.

Japan enters 1994 with its leadership divided over political reforms, economic policy and the government's decision to lift its ban on rice imports.

With the economy stuck in what may be the longest slump since World War II, pressure will build for more aggressive measures to stimulate investment and consumer spending.

Former Soviet Union

Armed with a new constitution, President Boris Yeltsin will try to fend off radical nationalists and keep Russia moving towards free market in 1994. It will not be easy.

He faces major obstacles: A

powerful faction of extreme nationalists in the new parliament, regional demands for more autonomy and public anger over economic hardship, rising crime and loss of the empire.

One of Russia's best-known astrologers, Glnba, has predicted a coup attempt in spring. Another claims Mr. Yeltsin will fall seriously ill. Many sober-minded Russians who are not superstitious also worry about such things.

Even without cataclysm, reformers may spend 1994 on the defensive. Their strongest redoubt is the new constitution, which gives Mr. Yeltsin sweeping power to issue decrees, make foreign policy and run the economy.

Radical nationalists, led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, will push for policy changes and cabinet seats. But Mr. Yeltsin can resist because the constitution gives him the power to nominate all top officials and to dissolve parliament if it repeatedly rejects his nominees for prime minister.

From Mr. Yeltsin's viewpoint, the charter's main defect is that it does not clearly define regional and federal authority. Tatarstan, Chechnya, Yukutia and other regions are demanding greater control over taxes, natural resources, and industry. Unless Mr. Yeltsin can make a deal with regional leaders, Russia runs the risk of disintegrating into independent republics, as the Soviet Union did.

Russians have a long history of oppression under czars and commissars, and their patience is great. But the results of the Dec. 12 election that sent ultranationalists to parliament indicate many citizens are upset by failure of free-market reforms to improve their lives.

Mr. Yeltsin's greatest task in 1994, and greatest challenge, is to change that outlook.

Other former Soviet republics also face economic turmoil. Ukraine and Georgia are struggling with severe energy shortages and high unemployment. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been wracked by six years of war over Nagorno-Karabakh, with no end in sight.

If there is a bright spot, it is the small Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, always the most Western-oriented of the Soviet republics. They are moving quickly toward market economies and have established relatively stable currencies. For them, 1994 could be a year of revival.

Eastern Europe

Four years after the demise of communism, the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe are still emerging.

All face another arduous year, stymied by a stagnant world economy, the Yugoslav conflict and popular disenchantment with western-style economics.

Fallout from the Balkan war will continue to threaten economic and political stability. The biggest fear is that the fighting will spread.

There are a few bright spots. Painful reforms are paying off in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, which will continue doing better than their eastern neighbours. They seem ready for genuine growth if a world recovery starts. The Yugoslav situation does not get worse and Western Europe drops its trade barriers.

Although Hungary has been an island of political stability, trouble may lie ahead. With the death of Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, and his party's popularity plunging, parliament could be splintered by an electoral free-for-all.

The only real hope for economic recovery in the former Yugoslavia lies in Slovenia, the northernmost region, which has turned to its Western European neighbours.

Expect little progress in Bulgaria or Romania, where political infighting and fear of labour unrest have sapped the will for reform. Even if they do get serious about reform, the two countries have lost billions in trade because of U.N. sanctions on neighbouring Serbia.

Slovakia has been in trouble since its divorce a year ago from the richer Czech Republic. Albania could show the fastest rate of growth in the region, but will remain the poorest country in Europe.

Western Europe

For Western Europe, the economy will remain the overriding concern in 1994.

In the dozen nations of the European Community, unemployment is expected to top 11 per cent, meaning 18 million people will be out of work.

Germany's economy, largest in the region, shows signs of shaking off its worst recession since World War II, but unemployment is expected to con-

tinue climbing.

To open up more jobs, EC members are under pressure to reduce costs per worker so hiring will be less expensive for employers. A key target will be the expensive social security network of disability, retirement, health and other benefits that have marked the European welfare state for decades.

Western European nations also seek ways to draw their eastern neighbours closer. The 16-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will hold a summit in early January — President Clinton's first to decide on requests for membership from Poland, Hungary and other former foes.

NATO probably will approve an American plan called partnership for peace, which would let eastern nations participate in joint military exercises, crisis management and peacekeeping without granting full membership. They would be required to share information about defence budgets and provide troops if asked.

EC members will start implementing their new treaty on European Union, which calls for a common foreign policy, joint central bank and single currency by 1999.

On Jan. 1, the 12 nations took a step towards a monetary merger by opening the European Monetary Institute, the forerunner of a central bank. Common foreign and defence policies are expected to lag behind, as illustrated by Western Europe's failure to halt the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Mexico and Central America

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) comes just in time for Mexico's leaders, who hope for an economic boost before the presidential election next year.

In his term as president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari made an economic revolution with free-market reforms capped by NAFTA, the accord with the United States and Canada that took effect Jan. 1.

Political reforms have come more slowly. Mr. Salinas followed tradition by choosing the ruling institutional Revolutionary Party's candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, who is almost certain to win and extend the Party's 65-year monopoly on national power for six more years.

Polis indicate the party would win a fair election, but opposition leaders believe they

Caribbean

In 1994, expect more political turmoil in Haiti and a continued economic decline in Cuba.

The outside world appears inclined to resolve the Haitian impasse with or without Jean Bertrand Aristide, the elected president overthrown by the military in 1991.

"Unfortunately, without Aristide it's going to leave the place in the same old mess," said Sociologist Anthony Maingot, who edits Hemisphere magazine for the Latin Caribbean Centre of Florida International University.

"It will mean more confusion and adversity," said Aaron Ramos, director of the Institute of Caribbean at the University of Puerto Rico.

Few are willing to predict the fate of Fidel Castro, who has ruled Cuba for 35 years, even after four years of economic suffering caused by the collapse of his Soviet-bloc sponsors.

Mr. Maingot sees the question as, "what is threshold of pain for that society?"

He and others believe the North American Free Trade Agreement will further isolate Mr. Castro from Mexico, which has been his main ally in the hemisphere.

Tourism in the Caribbean should have a banner year, but that will not offset job losses from a troubled regional eco-

nomy.

The lack of jobs will force more people to leave in search of work, most of them going to the United States.

Dependence on money they send home is expected to grow, as is the laundering of money from an increasing flow of Colombian cocaine through the Caribbean.

South America

Most of South America's civilian governments will push ahead with free-market reform in 1994.

Venezuela and Chile chose new presidents in December and Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay will do so this year.

Chile, Argentina and Venezuela, whose economic programme are farthest along, probably will seek to join the United States, Canada and Mexico in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Washington has said those three are the leading candidates.

Peru, Colombia, Paraguay, Ecuador and Bolivia plan to sell state-run companies as part of their reform programmes.

Brazil, the continent's giant, also is its biggest question mark. Congress will vote on a government plan to lower inflation, now more than 35 per cent a month. But with elections due in October, legislators are expected to resist spending cuts and tax increases.

An early favourite for the presidency is labour leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose belief in state control of some sectors raises doubts about how far economic reform will go in Brazil.

The economic future of Venezuela under the Rafael Caldera, the new president, also is unclear. Mr. Caldera ran a populist campaign and has suggested he might try to change parts of a free-market reform programme began in 1989.

In Colombia, the death of drug lord Pablo Escobar could reduce terrorism, but the growth of the rival Cali cartel ensures that cocaine will continue to flow.

Violence by leftist guerrillas in Peru may decline because of the capture of top leaders and splits within the insurgent ranks.

President Carlos Menem of Argentina is expected to continue his economic reforms, which have produced the region's highest growth rates for two years, and run for a second term in 1995.

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Special Issue No. 24

Drawing of January 2, 1994

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. 49691 B Wins JD 80,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 10,000 each wins JD 1,000 49692 49693 49771 49691 59691 49690 49691 49771 49691 59691
Holder of ticket No. 49691 A Wins JD 30,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 5,000 each wins JD 500 49692 49691 49771 49691 59691 49690 49691 49771 49691 59691
Holder of ticket No. 25147 A B Wins JD 15,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 4,000 each wins JD 300 25148 25157 25247 26147 35147 25146 25137 25047 26147 15147
Holder of ticket No. 39982 A B Wins JD 10,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 3,000 each wins JD 250 39983 39992 39082 39082 49982 39981 39972 39882 39882 29982
Holder of ticket No. 29328 A B Wins JD 9,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 2,000 each wins JD 200 29329 29338 29428 29328 39328 29327 29318 29228 29328 19328
Holder of ticket No. 61430 A B Wins JD 6,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each wins JD 150 61431 61440 61530 62430 71430 61439 61420 61330 60430 51430
Holder of ticket No. 46893 A B Wins JD 5,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 2,000 each wins JD 120 46894 46893 46993 47893 56893 46892 46883 46793 45893 36893
Holder of ticket No. 18138 A B Wins JD 3,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each wins JD 80 18139 18148 18238 19138 28138 18137 18128 18038 17138 08138
Holder of ticket No. 50274 A B Wins JD 2,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each wins JD 70 50275 50284 50374 51274 60274 50273 50264 50174 59274 40274

Ticket numbers	50622 57963 A B	Win JD 1,000 each
Ticket numbers	79582 39138 A B	Win JD 500 each

TICKETS ENDING WITH

3154 9723 A B	Win JD 200 each	3355 A B	Win JD 100 each
446 A B	Win JD 50 each	10 A B	Win JD 10 each
16,000 ticket ending with 4 Four A B Win JD 6 each			

COVER PRIZES FOR THE LOTTERY SELLERS

80 covers, attached to the stub of 10 ending in	538 793 780 333 A B	Win JD 20
Winners of the grand prizes in the ordinary issue number 23 of December 17, 1993		

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Next Draw takes place on January 17, 1994

Expenditure cut by 20%; determination seen to defend riyal

But analysts — calculating the cost of production, oil set aside for harder trade, subsidies given to local consumption and adding in sales of condensates — say it appeared to be based on a price for Arab Light crude of somewhere around \$14-\$16/barrel.

Arah Light ended 1993 at \$10.70 per barrel, and for prices to rise by more than \$3 on average during the year would imply Brent crude averaging more than \$16, well above the \$13-\$15 range with which traders have begun to feel comfortable.

"It's going to be hard to meet this budget with high subsidies, high population growth and low oil prices," an analyst said.

The analysts said prices would almost certainly have to rise substantially from current depressed levels to be able to reach the 1994 targets. SPA did not reveal the oil price assumptions on which the budget is based.

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Jordan to host 8th regional bridge championship in 1995

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian capital is set to become the bridge centre of the region when it hosts the 8th Bridge Federation of Africa, Asia and the Middle East (BFAAME) Championship in April-May 1995.

The internationally popular intellectual card game, officially first introduced in Jordan in 1979, has been steadily drawing a large number of players and fans in the Kingdom — a fact that led the World Bridge Federation (WBF) and the BFAAME council to accept the Jordan Bridge Association's (JBA) bid following WBF Vice President Mazhar Jafri's visit to Jordan last week to examine facilities and arrangements.

"I believe the JBA is fully capable of earning wide support to ensure a successful championship," Mr. Jafri told the Jordan Times. "The JBA is well-organised, and I was pleasantly surprised — Jordan's bridge club is probably the best of the zone," he added.

The WBF now has 94 member countries, represented by their national federations.

The member countries have been divided into seven zones: North America; Europe; South America; Africa, Asia and Middle East; Central America and the Caribbean; the Far East and the Pacific.

Jordan is a member of the Africa, Asia and Middle East zone which also includes Bangladesh, Botswana, Egypt, India, Kenya, Kuwait, Mauritius, Nepal, Morocco, Pakistan, Reunion Island, Saudi Arabia, S. Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

Competitions organised by WBF include the Bridge Olympiad, held in an Olympic year, in which every country can compete, and the World Championship, better known as the Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup, in which only qualifying teams from zonal competitions can take part.

The zonal biennial championship due to be held in Amman in 1995 will enable the top two teams of the open as well as the women's events to qualify for the World Championship due to be held in Beijing in Sept. 1995.

Mr. Jafri told the Jordan Times that he had, on behalf of the WBF, moved the Olympic Council of Asia and



World Bridge Federation Vice President Mazhar Jafri receives a shield from Jordan Bridge Federation's Honorary President, Mrs. Nawzat Shaher

the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for the recognition of the intellectual game of bridge as an approved sport and said that he was hopeful of the possibility of a favourable outcome by the end of the year. "An IOC recognition will very much enhance the status of bridge as a mental game. I see no reason that could prevent bridge from becoming an official sport because it fulfils the basic requirements stipulated by the IOC charter. It is competitive and enhances friendship and goodwill among nations," he noted.

He said that WBF was now

providing textbooks to teach bridge and that many countries were making bridge part of school curricula after recognising the game as a mental sport.

"You know, the fact that it is a card game should not belittle its status. Chinese leader Deng Xio Ping once said 'when people see me swimming they think I'm physically fit, but when they hear of me playing bridge they think I'm mentally fit'."

During his visit to Jordan, Mr. Jafri met Minister of Youth Abdullah Oweidat and JBA Honorary President Mrs. Nawzat Shaher.

Mr. Ghassan Ghanem, Jordan's representative in the BFAAME said that the JBA would now exert all efforts to ensure the championship's success.

"We are very much encouraged by Mr. Jafri's visit. We will now look for all kinds of sponsors and form committees to oversee the details of the championship," he said.

Mr. Ghanem noted that the number of bridge players in the country was rising constantly ever since the JBA was formed and accredited by the Ministry of Youth in 1979.

"We had 70 players when the JBA was first founded. Now we have over 400 registered members and we are hopeful many more people will learn and appreciate the game in years to come," he added.



Jordan Bridge Federation (JBA) President Bahjat Majali signs an agreement to host the 8th Bridge Federation of Africa, Asia and the Middle East Championship in Amman in 1995. Also present are JBA Vice President Ghassan Ghanem (left) and World Bridge Federation Vice President Mazhar Jafri

Unseeded Germans knock out S. Africa in Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Gianikillers Germany became Sunday the second team to eliminate seeded opposition from the Hopman Cup tennis mixed teams' tournament when they knocked out South Africa.

Bernad Karbacher and Anke Huber defeated the eighth-seeded South Africans Marcos Ondruska and Amanda Coetzer on the third day of the 760,000 dollar Australian (\$540,000) 12-nation contest.

Huber gave the Germans a flying start, beating Coetzer 7-6 (7/4), 3-6, 6-1 in a fiercely contested three-set thriller that lasted two hours, 12 minutes.

Then Karbacher ensured his country's place in the quarterfinals when he overcame Ondruska 6-4, 6-4 in only 77 minutes.

South Africa secured a consolation prize when Ondruska and Coetzer defeated the German pair 8-7 in a mixed doubles pro set.

Germany now clash with the powerful second-seeded United States' pairing of Ivan Lendl and Mary Joe Fernandez Tuesday night.

Germany won the competition last year when they were represented by Michael Stich and Steffi Graf, but with the superstars unavailable to defend the title, they were not even seeded this year.

Karbacher conceded that the U.S. pair would be formidable opponents.

"I have never played Lendl before. But he is not used to playing in mixed doubles and anything can happen," he said.

"Perhaps our best chance of beating the U.S. is to win both singles clashes. So there is no pressure on us in the mixed doubles," added Huber.

Ondruska said he and Coetzer had been "very nervous" before their match with the Germans, which got them off

to a slow start.

In the women's singles, Huber was fully extended to overcome the tenacious Coetzer.

The 19-year-old German, ranked 10th in the world, threatened to overwhelm the South African, ranked 15th, racing to a 3-0 lead in the opening set after breaking Coetzer's service in the first and third games.

But Coetzer, a short, stocky and fiercely determined player, rallied in dazzling style, breaking Huber's service three times to lead at 6-5. Huber levelled at 6-6 and, in the tie-breaker, remained steadier to clinch the set.

Coetzer's fighting qualities shone through in the second set, in which she broke Huber's service in the first, third and seventh games, and it was not until the deciding set that a more confident Huber established domination.

The cool Karbacher, with a world ranking of 54, always appeared to have the measure of Ondruska (ranked 40th) in the men's singles.

Switzerland also moved into the quarterfinals of the Hopman Cup tournament Sunday when they knocked The Netherlands out of the 12-nation contest.

Jakob Hlasek and Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere gave Switzerland an unassailable lead at the Burswood Dome when they both won their singles matches.

Hlasek defeated Jan Siermerink 4-6, 6-4, 7-5, and Maleeva-Fragniere overcame Miriam Oremans 3-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Switzerland, for whom Hlasek and Maleeva-Fragniere won the Hopman Cup two years ago, now clash with the top-seeded Czech Republic pair, Petr Korda and Jana Novotna, Tuesday.

Chinese golden girls fail to clean up swimming gold

HONG KONG (AFP) — China's women swimmers took three gold medals to increase their gold medal tally at the Epson Short-Course Swimming World Cup Sunday but the result still fell short of expectations.

Chinese swimmer Le Jingye — holder of short-course world records in the 50-metre and 100m freestyle events — easily took the 100m freestyle title to add to the two golds she won Saturday.

But, despite more golds from Dai Guohong and Lou Xia in the 200m and 50m breaststroke events respectively, the second day of this two-day meet was marked by disappointment for the Chinese women.

Pre-meet favourite Dai — winner of four golds at the Short-Course World Championships in Palma De Mallorca in early December — was

disqualified for a false start in the finals of the 50m butterfly, which was won by Angela Kennedy of Australia.

After a strong showing Saturday, Australia's women swimmers continued to threaten China's dominance Sunday in the women's events as Elli Overton brought her medal tally to four, with wins in the 100m and 400m individual medleys.

Meanwhile, Australia's Mark Kowalski won the gruelling 800m freestyle marathon by more than seven seconds to help bring Australia's gold medal total to six.

The men's results were mixed, with the Russians performing strongly, but without a hoped-for record breaking swim from Alexandre Popov, who shaved 0.11 seconds off the 100m short-course with a time of 47.83 seconds Saturday.

In a hotly contested 50m freestyle final, Lithuanian Raimundas Majulolis edged Popov out by 0.4 seconds to win his country's only gold of the tournament.

While Popov failed to take a gold Sunday, Vladimir Selkov, Denis Pakratov and Vladimir Pyschenko combined for a gold medal triple haul in the 200 m backstroke, 100m butterfly and 200m freestyle.

Nina Jivaneskaya added to the Russian tally with victory in the women's 100m back-

stroke event.

Christian Keller of Germany staked his claim as an individual medley specialist, winning the men's 200m title, after taking golds in the 100m and 400m individual medley categories.

Compatriot Dagmar Hase won a powerful victory in the women's 400m freestyle to bring Germany's gold medal total to five, with Dane Mette Jacobsen winning Denmark's only gold with a win in the women's 200m butterfly.

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Foreign footballers scandal takes new turn in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The foreign footballers scandal rocking South Africa has taken a new turn with a Liberian admitting he played here for two seasons under a false name.

Former national striker Friday Roberts fled the war-ravaged West African nation in 1991 to join Bloemfontein Celtic, a first division club from Orange Free State province. Celtic officials repeatedly

denied media claims that the Liberian was a foreigner, and he became an established first-team player using the name Williams.

But Roberts, who previously for mighty Barolle of Monrovia, admitted Sunday that Celtic brought him into the country illegally and changed his name.

South Africa permits clubs to register five foreigners and field three, rules which some

clubs allegedly break by altering players' names and giving them false identity documents.

Responding to frequent

press reports of abuse, National Football Association officials launched an inquiry and the findings should be released during January.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH
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WHERE HAVE ALL THE LOSERS GONE?

Both vulnerable, South deals.
NORTH
♠ K Q 8 4
♥ A 2
♦ K 7 4
♣ 8 5 3
WEST
♠ A 6 5
♥ J 10 7 6
♦ Q 8 6 3
♣ 2
EAST
♠ J 10 2
♥ 3
♦ J 10 9 2
♣ A K 10 9 3
SOUTH
♠ 7 3
♥ K Q 8 5 4
♦ A
♣ Q 7 4
The bidding:
South West North East
1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♥ Pass 4♥ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠
It is easier for declarer, who sees all his side's assets, to read the opening lead than it is for the leader's partner, who has only one hand and dummy to work with. That affords declarer opportunities for deceptive plays which pose real problems for the defenders.

This deal is from a club tournament in Buffalo, N.Y. Sitting North-South were Jim Mathis and Gerald Fried. Since South's two-heart rebid promised a six-card suit,

Mathis' raise to four hearts would be the expert's choice.

West led the deuce of clubs, East won with the king and it did not take a card-playing wizard to work out that West's lead was probably a singleton. Therefore, declarer stood to lose two clubs, a ruff and the ace of spades. To paint a different picture of the hand for East, declarer calmly dropped the queen from hand.

West could easily have led from four clubs, in which case trying to cash the ace of clubs might have been fatal. Declarer would ruff and the jack of clubs would be set up for a discard. So East shifted to the jack of diamonds. Declarer won, led a spade to the queen, returned to hand with a diamond ruff and led another spade. West shot up with the ace and returned the jack of trumps, but declarer was in control. South won in hand with the king, drew another trump with the ace, then discarded two clubs on the kings of diamonds and spades. When the spades divided evenly, declarer ditched his remaining club on a good spade as West ruffed. Declarer lost only one club, a club ruff and the ace of spades.

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Ahmad Zaki and Mahmoud Hamideh
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(ARABIC)
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daily at 11:00 a.m.
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Reformist team heads for talks with PLO chief

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A group of Palestinian activists seeking reforms in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) left for Tunis Sunday for talks with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The team is led by Haidar Abdul Shafi, who served as the head of the PLO-guided negotiators in the 26-month-old peace talks with Israel, and includes members of the Palestine People's Party and the Palestinian Democratic Movement (PDM) as well as independents.

Their meeting with Mr. Arafat, expected to begin late Sunday, came in response to several months of intense campaigning and a petition to the PLO chairman expressing discontent with the way he was handling PLO decision-making and negotiations with Israel on the implementation of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

"The delegation is going to Tunis with an open mind, but the main objective of the visit is to ensure that Mr. Arafat changes his autocratic style," said a source close to reformist camp.

"We hope Arafat would live up to whatever he agreed at the meeting and would not return to his ways of promising something and doing something else," added the source, who preferred anonymity.

Unlike headline PLO factions and activists who oppose the autonomy accord, the reformers endorse the autonomy agreement but argue that the PLO chairman's approach to peace-making could undermine the Palestinians' quest for statehood by depriving their representative organisation of credibility in the international scene.

Several members of the Palestinian peace negotiating team and their advisers as well as leading personalities from the occupied territories and the diaspora have joined the reformers.

Mr. Arafat, who has been ignoring earlier efforts by the reformist camp, agreed to meeting the delegation after he came under heavy pressure from within the PLO Executive Committee.

Tayseer Arouri, a member

of the delegation which left for Tunis Sunday, said early this month: "It is time the PLO leadership realised that building a state is different from running a revolutionary movement."

The reference included an argument that Mr. Arafat, having secured international support and pledges of financial support for his peace moves with Israel, risked losing the backing if he continued to apply political considerations rather than individual qualifications and expertise in naming people to key jobs in setting up Palestinian infrastructure.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, quoted by Reuters, said: "We are determined to see that there is a positive response. It is not a challenge to Arafat's leadership. We want his leadership to be based on a more secure broad-based decision-making basis."

The Gaza-based physician, who criticises the autonomy accord saying it falls short of Palestinian aspirations, said the timing of the meeting with Mr. Arafat was more pressing than ever as the negotiating process opened "the possibility of assuming responsibilities for running our own civil affairs."

"Our demand is that Arafat commits himself to democratic principles by seeking competent Palestinians and not by sacrificing qualifications for political considerations," he said.

In addition to Dr. Abdul Shafi and Dr. Arouri, the delegation includes Nabil Amer, a former PLO envoy and Arafat confidant, and activists Abdul Hafez Asabb, Ghazi Khalil, Tawfiq Abu Bakr, and Ibrahim Abu Ayash.

During his three-day stay in Amman after arriving from the West Bank, Dr. Abdul Shafi met with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Mijali and several Palestinian figures in Jordan.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abdul Shafi stressed the need for enhancing Jordanian-Palestinian coordination "particularly at this time when the peace talks are passing through a genuine crisis," which requires closer Arab coordination to "secure Arab rights and interests."



PROTEST: Palestinian women shout at Israeli troops shot and wounded at least six Palestinians, including a pregnant woman (AFP photo)

Defence concludes argument in assassination plot trial

AMMAN (AP) — Defence lawyers Sunday rested their case in the trial of 10 Jordanians accused of plotting to kill King Hussein, rejecting pre-trial confessions and demanding the conditional release of the defendants.

Defence lawyer Omar Dhamra, reading a 150-page summation, argued that the confessions were extracted under torture and as such could not be admitted as evidence.

He demanded that the court return an innocent verdict and release the defendants.

The State Security Court, a three-man military tribunal, will hold a "final review" of the case Jan. 9 and set a date for issuing the verdict, prosecution sources said.

Under standing orders of the court, the defendants and witnesses could not be identified by name in media reports. Two of the accused are being tried in absentia.

Five military cadets, a member of a guard unit of King Hussein and four others, including the two fugitives, are charged with plotting to assassinate the monarch and pave the way for a take-over of power by the illegal Hezb Al Tahrir group.

Hezb Al Tahrir, a puritan group established in the early 50s, does not recognise any of the existing Arab governments and call for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate.

The prosecution charges that the five cadets, students at Muta University, a military college in south Jordan, were enlisted by Hezb Al Tahrir to

open fire at the King during a guard of honour at a Muta graduation ceremony on June 26.

The students were told that as soon as the King was killed, pre-positioned Hezb Al Tahrir members were to take over radio and television stations and seize power, according to prosecutor Muhammad Hijazi, an army major.

Mr. Dhamra and other defence lawyers who addressed the court last week summed up that the accused were subject to "severe physical torture and psychological duress" to force them into signing the confessions.

The statements, given by the eight accused during three months of detention at the intelligence department, are one of the pillars of the prosecution's case.

All the defendants on court retraced the confessions and entered innocent pleas at the outset of the trial, which began in September.

The defence has also argued that Hezb Al Tahrir did not espouse violence as a means to achieve its objective, and as such the prosecution charges based on the group's ideology were invalid.

Prosecution witnesses have testified that the five cadets were devout Muslims who resented the pro-Western "un-Islamic" policies of the government.

They also told the court that the five were ardent admirers of Lieutenant Khaled Al Islambouly, who assassinated Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak during a Cairo military parade in October 1981.

Balladur chided for sending Iranians to Tehran

PARIS (R) — France's popular conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur faced harsh words Sunday for flying two suspected Iranian assassins home to safety instead of handing them over to the Swiss justice.

Paris' decision to reject a Swiss extradition request for the pair against the advice of its own courts brought criticism from the French and Iranian opposition as well as from victims of pro-Iranian attacks that terrorised France in the 1980s.

"Terrorism is international yet we're now refusing to cooperate with Swiss justice," said Francoise Rudetzki, maimed in a 1986 bombing in Paris by guerrillas and now head of an association of victims of such attacks.

The opposition socialists said the decision was "incoherent and deplorably inconsequential."

Mohsen Sharif-Esfahani and Ahmad Taheri were taken from jail and flown home secretly last week despite a French court ruling in February in favour of their extradition to Switzerland.

Mr. Balladur made the move public in a terse statement on Thursday, two days after the flight.

"The French authorities have decided not to extradite (the two) for reasons involving national interest. No further comment will be made on this affair," a statement from his office said.

Asked to offer some explanation during a television talk-show on Sunday, European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassourie said: "At times brevity is best."

Refusing further comment, he said on France 2: "In the war on international terrorism, the least said is the best."

Officials and police chiefs too remained silent. "One can only presume a serious threat has been made," a French official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters.

Arrested at Bern's request in Paris in November 1992, the men were wanted for the 1990 murder in Geneva of leading Iranian dissident Kazem Rajavi, brother of Massoud Rajavi, who heads Iran's Mujahedeen-e-Khalq guerrilla movement, based in Iraq.

In an unusually sharp statement, Switzerland described the move as "disconcerting" and lodged a formal protest "against this breaking of the European extradition accord."

"Tension with Iran is undoubtedly more dangerous than tension with Switzerland," quipped the daily Le Monde newspaper.

"But appearing to cave in to the threat of terrorism is certainly not the best way to fight it."

Newspaper across the political spectrum saw Paris' decision as the latest twist in a decade of rocky ties with Iran's fundamentalist leaders in which successive French governments had capitulated too often and perhaps to no avail.

The mass-circulation conservative daily, France-Soir, called it "a strange gift from Paris to Tehran." The popular Le Parisien described the move as "astonishing."

It said that the tough-talking conservatives, who have rounded up scores of suspected Algerian fundamentalists and Kurdish separatists in the past few weeks, were compromising their own promises of muscle on the law and order front.

Sudan says British envoy worked against Khartoum

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has accused the British ambassador ordered to leave the country of working directly against the interests of the Khartoum government.

But a "highly-placed political source" hinted in a report in the government newspaper Al Ingaz Al Watani that the expulsion could be reversed if Britain understood why it was ordered.

The unnamed official told the newspaper Ambassador Peter Streams was responsible for the failure of Sudan's efforts to improve ties with the West.

The report on Sunday contained no specific examples of how Mr. Streams allegedly undermined his host state.

The official also said the expulsion had nothing to do with the ambassador's contacts with prominent Sudanese opposition leaders or controversy over a visit by the archbishop of Canterbury, spiritual leader of the Anglican faith.

Military ruler Omar Hassan Al Bashir said on Saturday the aim of expelling Mr. Streams was to show Britain that Sudan was no longer part of the British empire.

"You have heard through the media that we have asked Britain, the colonial state, to recall its ambassador in Khartoum because he interfered in and encroached on what did not concern him," Lieutenant-General Bashir said in a speech to mark the 38th anniversary of independence.

"We wanted it as a lesson for them (the British)... that we are independent and will not permit anyone to harm our independence," he added.

Sudan said on Thursday it was giving Mr. Streams two weeks to leave the country. Britain has given Sudan until Tuesday to reverse the decision (see page 2).

The Sudanese government earlier blamed Streams for the cancellation of a visit to northern Sudan by Archbishop George Carey, who decided to visit only the rebel-controlled south.

The archbishop said on Friday the decision was his alone and he was sad about the expulsion.

The government newspaper said the ambassador's expulsion came after a long study of his behaviour.

Britain has threatened a tit-for-tat expulsion of Sudan's ambassador to London if Khartoum's order stands. But Sudan has since moved its envoy, Ali Mohammad Osman Yassin, to New York where he is now Sudan's permanent representative at the United Nations. His replacement in London has not been named.

Ties with Eritrea

Sudan denied Sunday a charge by Eritrea that invaders launched an attack on it from Sudanese soil last month.

Al Ingaz Al Watani quoted an unidentified senior official as saying the charges were unfounded, and Sudan had no interest in changing the government in Eritrea or in carrying out hostile acts against it.

Sudan has faced charges by the West and its northern neighbour, Egypt of harbouring militants with backing by Iran.

President Isaias Aferwerki of Eritrea said Saturday that 20 invaders from Sudan, led by an Eritrean military commander, were killed in a shootout Dec. 16. He said they included Moroccans, Tunisians and Pakistanis, and were part of a holy war movement.

The attack had not been publicised at the time, but Mr. Aferwerki said there had been similar clashes along the border in a bid by fundamentalists to overthrow his government.

But, Al Ingaz Al Watani quoted the Sudanese official as saying: "There is no foundation for such allegations. It would be better to look for the real reasons of such tension."

The official pointed out that more than 500,000 Eritrean refugees were being sheltered in Sudan, under the supervision of Sudanese security forces.

Jordan-Qatar reconciliation sealed

(Continued from page 1)

quest for a negotiated settlement with Israel based on the return of the Kingdom's territory occupied by the Jewish state and restoration of Jordan's water right.

Sheikh Hamad told Sunday's press conference that his country was seeking to end the rifts in the Arab World caused by the Gulf crisis, but it would be some time before the Arab countries would be able to settle their differences.

"Arab reconciliation needs time and it will take place in stages before Arabs can sit down at one table again and start a frank dialogue," he said.

In unusually frank and unambiguous comments for a Gulf minister, Sheikh Hamad said Qatar's decision to send him to Amman on an official visit was "taken at the highest level" and that the visit had "removed all differences" between Amman and Doha.

He expressed hope that Qatar's partners in the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) would also follow Doha's example and seek to heal the strain in relations.

Assessing Doha's independent policy, Sheikh Hamad said that if other Arab countries "are not happy with our visit to Jordan... then that is their problem."

The Qatari minister called on Arab states to end their ostracism of Iraq because Iraq "is an important country in the Arab World and it is imperative to remove all misunderstandings that mar Arab relations."

Unlike its GCC partners, Qatar sent back its ambassador to Baghdad shortly after the Gulf war over Kuwait. A senior Qatari defence official visited the Iraqi capital last month, triggering a protest from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Doha rejected the criticism.

Sheikh Hamad criticised Arab countries for their reticence to contact Israel and also rejection of negotiations with the Jewish state in Arab capitals.

"If they could meet in Washington, Moscow and Peking, why not in Arab countries?" he asked. "It is a psychological problem..."

Israel insists PLO accept paper

(Continued from page 1)

a Jordan River site, Maghtas, where tradition says Jesus was baptised, Israel Radio reports said.

In an interview with Al Quds newspaper, Dr. Shaath said Palestinian negotiators trying to expand the size of the area under their control as much as possible had focused on at least three historic sites around Jericho.

U.S.'s wealthiest bachelor marries

LANAI, Hawaii (R) — Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft Corp and America's wealthiest bachelor, married his longtime girlfriend on this exclusive island Saturday surrounded by family and billionaire friends.

Gates, the nation's second-richest person with a net worth of at least \$6 billion, married Melinda French, a Microsoft marketing manager from Dallas, a source, who asked not to be named told Reuters. The wedding took place on a spit of land overlooking the blue waters of the Pacific at the plush Manele Bay Hotel golf resort on the island just west of Maui, the source said. Erin Carney, a spokeswoman for Microsoft, said news organisations would be given written confirmation of the wedding but said a company statement might not be released until later Sunday, when an official photograph also would be distributed.

Among the approximately 130 guests expected at the celebration were Nebraska investor Warren Buffett, the only American wealthiest than Gates, and two other Microsoft billionaires, Executive Vice-President Steve Ballmer and company co-founder Paul Allen. The Rev. William Sullivan, a Jesuit priest who is president of Seattle University, performed the ceremony.

Monk uses fire engine to sprinkle holy water

BANGKOK (R) — A Buddhist monk in northeastern Thailand used a fire engine to spray 2,500 litres (660 gallons) of holy water on thousands of followers to bless them for the new year. A source in the firemen's office in Nakorn Ratchasima 260 kilometres north of Bangkok, told Reuters by phone that Phra Koon, 71, well known for his beliefs in black magic and superstitions, borrowed a fire engine for the ceremony. About 10,000 people gathered in front of the provincial hall as Phra Koon prepared the holy water, loaded it in the fire engine and turned the hose on followers. Some Buddhist monks who believe in black magic say the holy water protects followers against bad spirits and brings good luck. Last August, when the Royal Plaza Hotel collapsed in Nakorn Ratchasima, killing 137 people and injuring more than 200 others, Phra Koon performed similar rites at the scene which some rescuers said hampered their work.

Hearing set for Reynolds, Anderson divorce case

JUPITER, Fla. (R) — Actress Loni Anderson claims she is nearly broke and needs temporary alimony from her estranged husband Burt Reynolds to maintain her affluent lifestyle court documents show. Lawyers for the couple are scheduled to appear in state court Monday for the first in a series of hearings in the high-profile divorce case.

The pair of celebrities own a ranch in south Florida and made frequent appearances on behalf of local charities until they filed for divorce last June. Anderson, 47, claims she entered the marriage in 1988 with \$1 million in cash. She earned about \$1.7 million during the marriage, but spent all the money on marital living expenses and child care for the couple's adopted five-year-old son, Quinton, according to court records. One of Reynolds' attorneys disputed the portrayal of Anderson as on the verge of homelessness.

"This is just not a situation where she is destitute and requires payment," Stuart Attorney Noel Bobko said. "She is gainfully employed and doing very well." The documents did not specify how much money in alimony Anderson is seeking. "During the marriage, the parties enjoyed a prosperous lifestyle, with homes in Florida, North Carolina and California," Anderson's attorneys said in documents filed in Martin County Court, where the couple's divorce case is pending. In addition to alimony, the blond former star of television show WKRP in Cincinnati is asking that Reynolds pay her attorney fees and experts needed to prepare for the divorce trial including accountants and a bankruptcy attorney. A California judge ordered Reynolds, 57, to pay temporary child support after Reynolds, star of the television show "Evening Shade," filed for divorce in Florida.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Mafia dons on the run in Britain'

LONDON (AFP) — Britain has been selected as a "safe haven" by some of the mafia's most dangerous criminals, including the suspected assassin of the mafia-fighting Judge Giovanni Falcone, the Sunday Times reported here. According to the paper, Italian authorities have given Scotland Yard a list of senior mafiosi on the run, whom they believe could be hiding here. They include Giovanni Brusca, 36, whom the weekly described as a member of one of the most powerful families in Sicily and, according to informers' evidence, the man who set off by remote control the bomb that killed Judge Falcone. Others on the list include Leoluca "the Colonel" Bagarella, 50, brother-in-law of Salvatore "Totò" Riina, the undisputed godfather of Sicily. A third mafia don, Bernardo Provenzano, a ruthless killer known as "the Tractor" because he "mows people down," may also be hiding in Britain, the paper said. Considered number two in the Corleone clan, he is wanted for several murders.

AFP pulls out Gulf HQ out of Bahrain

MANAMA (R) — The French news agency Agence France Presse (AFP) said Sunday it was shutting down its Gulf headquarters in Bahrain and moving to Dubai this week. AFP deputy chief correspondent Hassan Haidar told Reuters that the agency, which had six correspondents and four other staff in Bahrain, was moving for technical reasons. Tuesday would be the last day of operations. He said that in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, the agency was able to receive more of the Middle East's government news agencies, and it was also permitted to set up its own satellite dish on its building. Mr. Haidar said AFP had been in Bahrain for 17 years, during which time two correspondents had been expelled. He said the agency planned to hire a part-time correspondent to cover Bahrain.

Mamedov to prepare summit

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgi Mamedov left for Washington on Sunday to prepare the planned Moscow summit between presidents Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton from Jan. 12 to 15. ITAR-TASS reported, Mr. Mamedov said before he left that his talks in Washington would centre on disarmament and other issues on the summit agenda, the news agency said. Mr. Clinton is due to visit Moscow immediately after a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation summit in Brussels on Jan. 10 and 11. He is also scheduled to make a brief trip to Belarus, one of the four nuclear powers of the former Soviet Union.

17 seamen still missing after freighter sinks

TOKYO (AFP) — Seventeen of the 29 crew members aboard the 6,700-tonne freighter Arctic Reefer were still missing Sunday after the Cypriot-registered ship sank overnight in the Pacific Ocean off Japan, officials said. Five patrol boats and three aircraft from Japan's maritime safety agency were continuing the search Sunday for the seamen in waters 500 kilometres south of Kochi prefecture in southwestern Japan. Twelve crew members — six Filipinos, four Greeks, a Dutch and a Burmese — were rescued alive. The freighter, bound for Venezuela from the eastern Chinese coastal city of Shanghai, sent out a distress signal Saturday, saying there had been an explosion on board.

Gunmen attack U.N. aid agency in Baidoa

MOGADISHU (AP) — Unidentified gunmen broke into a World Food Programme (WFP) compound in the southern city of Baidoa, killing one Somali and wounding another, U.N. officials said.

A senior U.N. military official said that it was premature to blame the attack on Muslim extremists, but said that U.N. analysts suspect the shootings may be part of a larger campaign against non-Muslim aid agencies.

"This is to a certain extent speculation, but it is based on information that we have," said the official, who spoke only on condition that his name not be published. U.N. officials are often hesitant to discuss intelligence matters openly.

He declined to specify what further information the U.N. possessed about threats by Muslim extremists.

Because of poor communications between Mogadishu and Baidoa, few details were available Sunday on the shootings, other than that they took place Saturday night. The names of the victims, a guard and a driver, were not released.

WFP Director Gemmo Lodessani said he was uncertain if the attack was politically or religiously motivated or was simply an attempt to steal one of the U.N. agency vehicles. Well-armed looters frequently rob aid agencies, who hire guards to protect their operations.

Just before Christmas, an anonymous group claiming to represent fundamentalist Muslims issued a statement threatening a holy war against Christian evangelism in Somalia.

The group accused the U.N.

and aid groups of passing out Bibles in the Somali language and distributing items prohibited by Islam, including pork, pornography, alcohol and hashish.

"Anybody who tries to distribute anything concerning Christianity will be shot," said the warning.

On Christmas eve, unidentified attackers threw hand grenades into the Baidoa offices of Catholic Relief Services and the Irish charity Goal Ireland, injuring two Somali guards.

Almost all Somalis are Muslims, but locals say that very few people in the capital subscribe to violent religious views and that extremism does not present a major threat in the country at this time.

Mr. Lodessani agreed that it is too early to conclude that religious extremism is on the rise in Somalia, which has suffered years of political and clan-based violence that provoked the massive U.N. military intervention in December 1992.

"We receive threats every day," Mr. Lodessani said. "It might be the fundamentalists — nobody knows."

He said attacks on aid workers have forced him to close temporarily the WFP office in Bardera, in southwestern Somalia, and that further attacks would impede WFP operations elsewhere.

"My policy for 1994 is whenever I have a problem, I shut down," Mr. Lodessani said.

He did not say whether WFP would close its Baidoa office. There are 26,000 U.N. troops from 29 countries in Somalia, including thousands from countries such as Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.